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THE FIRST TWELVE CENTURIES OF BRITISH STORY

A Slight Sketch and Criticism of the Social and Political Conditions in the British Islands (herein called Britain) from the Year 56 B.C. to the Accession of Henry II to the Throne of England in 1154 A.D.

BY

J. W. JEUDWINE

LL.B. (CAMB.), OF LINCOLN'S INN, BARRISTER-AT-LAW

WITH 21 SKETCH MAPS AND 3 PHOTOGRAPHIC REPRODUCTIONS OF MEDIÆVAL MAPS

"There is a heritage of heroic example and noble obligation, not reckoned in the Wealth of Nations, but essential to a nation's life, the contempt of which, in any people, may, not slowly, mean even its commercial fall."

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PREFACE

No one, so far as I am aware, has attempted to write any part of the story of the British Islands as a whole, apart from the special story of any one locality. By far the greater part of the historical works dealing with the islands are histories of England. Notices of affairs concerning other parts of the islands are inserted in these histories only when they happen to affect the current of the English story; they are thus treated solely from the English point of view, as matter bearing on the development of the National institutions of England. The histories of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, which fill up the tale of the island history, when not concerned with domestic affairs, are in consequence not infrequently bitterly hostile in their comments on their ancient enemy, the English.

England must always figure most prominently in any such book. All the Roman occupation, a part of our history of which there is nothing new to tell, but a part which with all its benefits can never be ignored, and all its benefits are hers, and belong to her only; it is England only who receives the fresh blood of the first Scandinavian invasions; the political institutions, the language, with the exception of Scotland the legal procedure, and to a great extent the religious development of the islands, are English, and have come to the rest through England.

This creates the difficulty, when treating the islands as a whole, of observing unity or impartiality of narrative, and of finding terms to express social or political conditions which are common to the different parts of the islands. This difficulty is increased in the period which fills a great part of this volume, when the tribe was the centre of political life, by the fact that the different parts are not

continuously connected in history, only coming into contact at intervals according to the records which survive, though the connection was probably a good deal closer in fact than appears from them. In this period there was, apart from the Papacy, no centre of authority which could form a starting point for political unity, no supremacy of social custom which could stand as a model for universal usage. It was of the essence of the tribe as a unit that each unit lived in splendid isolation, regarding its neighbour with jealousy and distrust like that shown to each other by the European nations at the present day.

Yet in the author's humble opinion, it is quite impossible in this period to obtain such a sense of proportion as will ensure fair conclusions, without treating of the islands as a whole, in the light of records, many of them of surpassing value, from all parts of the islands and from Scandinavia, which are generally either despised or ignored.

Especially are the Scandinavian Sagas, records founded on oral tradition, and the Irish Annals compiled from undoubtedly ancient sources no longer existing, both apparently free from any theological bias, of prime necessity for a true view of British history; and they are far more healthy reading than the Benedictine chroniclers of the twelfth century. With the Sagas we are at the seaside in the sun and the wind: all the vulgar occupations and ambitions of men and women, all the provoking pranks of the childhood of the world disturb our quiet and shock our moral sense; it is a real picture of social life; with the monk we are behind walls, sharing the pessimistic aspirations of a man cut off from life, bending our minds to find in the facts of history the moral lesson for our present world, and to imagine a supernatural world such as never was and never will be.

This neglect of outside records affects the very beginnings of history. In English histories which take no account of the saints of British faith and British nurture, of Ninian, David, Patrick, Bridget, Mungo, Columba, Wilfrid, Aidan, and Chad, to say nothing of Columbanus, Gall, Willibrord, and Boniface, or even of our arch heretics

Pelagius, Agricola, and Celestius, the little "Italian mission" under Augustine, which hardly went outside the boundaries of Kent and Essex, and never learnt the language of the people whose faiths they questioned, is treated in grotesque disproportion to fact.

If the barest facts concerning the origin of the Church in Britain had been allowed to appear in English history, it would have been impossible, even for the most ignorant, to speak of the ancient Church in Wales as an "alien" Church.

In later years, without the light thrown on the subject in records from without England, the story of the Scandinavian invasion of the ninth to the eleventh centuries, which affected every part of all the islands, becomes a dry and misleading tale of isolated encounters and treacheries. This period must always to a great extent be the subject of speculation and theory by compilers of history, for the following reasons.

It deals with events which render it necessary that the writer should be acquainted with the history during the time, not of one country only, but of many, implying when a proper history of this time shall come to be written a collaboration which is very difficult to secure, and a research beyond the limits of a lifetime.

The materials are remote in time and in archaic language: the events recorded range over an immense territory and a long period; their nature, naval action, makes it difficult to distinguish chance from design; and the confusion has grown worse through the neglect by British historians of two-thirds of the materials.

For a history of naval action in any one country which arises from conditions and happenings in another or others far distant, strategy plays a far greater part than tactics, and this not naval or military merely, but strategy political and theological

As my chief object during this very complicated and difficult period has been to write a clear and readable story, though I am conscious that in this I have very greatly

failed, only a very small part of this material has been used. In fact, one of the great difficulties of this work has been in this period to weigh the value of and to choose facts from an enormous mass of original authorities, most of which are unknown to the average British reader.

As a still later instance of the value of treating the islands as a whole, the revolt of Robert de Belesme against Henry I of England, treated by itself, is merely the commonplace feudal rebellion which attends the reign of every Norman; but it becomes an interesting link in British history when it is read in connection with the expedition of Magnus Barfod to the Isles: an expedition covering Man, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland, connecting the revolted subjects of the English king and their Welsh and Irish alliances with the Norwegian king, whose war finances were managed by a merchant of Lincoln, and who owned at that time as his colonies one half of modern Scotland.

As British history develops, the necessity for a connected and impartial story becomes more and more apparent. It is hard to see how an Irishman can be vitally interested in the conquest of Scotland and Wales by Edward I, a Scot in the invasion of Ireland by Strongbow or a Welshman in the baronial struggle over Magna Charta, unless he reads of these events as parts of a connected story in which his people share.

When the eighteenth century comes, the men of all parts are depicted as fighting side by side to build up the empire: but the habit of separation is so ingrained that it is with difficulty that it becomes British history.

There is obvious disadvantage in concluding this volume at the moment when the islands, except Man, and the North-West of Scotland came for a time under one authority, probably the most interesting time of early British history, the age of great commercial expansion, of a literary revival, of a great increase in papal authority, of a complete change in all military organisation, in agriculture, in finance, in legal procedure, an age of revolutionary development throughout Europe. But the amount of material, four times as

great for British as for English history, has settled the limits.

Although 1154 marks a distinct change in the character of British history, there is a quantity of historical material subsequent in date which is of great value for illustrating the earlier period, in respect of social matters, which only slowly or hardly change. In consequence, I have been compelled either to use authorities or illustrations from times much later, as when the conditions of life on the farm are quoted from Fitzherbert, or the unchanging medical practice of the fifteenth century is cited as supplemental to the older records, or to consider the subject as one outside this present volume, as in the case of the very interesting history of the Exchequer, and the practice of the King's Court connected with it.

Stress is laid upon the tribe as the basis of all early society. Owing to early English history having been written by the Roman Benedictines, whose minds were set on the unifying power of the Church, this fact has been unduly ignored. Not seldom has a society been described as if it were a modern nation under federal government, when in fact it was a loose confederation of tribal units under an overlord. No cause has been so fruitful of historical misrepresentation, a misrepresentation easier to avoid when the story of England, which under the leadership of the Roman Church struggled so much earlier out of the tribal condition, is told in connection with the story of the rest of the islands.

It has been unnecessary in a slight work of this kind to follow the speculations of ethnology as to the various races, where they serve no useful purpose in history, especially as the conclusions of the science are in great part set at naught by the haphazard adulteration of intermarriage. On the other hand, it is essential that the distinction between the Danish and Norwegian invaders from the ninth century onwards, where it can be traced, should be put in the clearest light. I have confined myself as far as possible, when mentioning social matters, to the usages common to all tribal society.

As far as possible, contemporary authority only has been used. When, as frequently happens, this is not possible, all early authorities bearing upon the subject have been consulted, and those only have been used which appear to be trustworthy.[1]

The word Britain is used, for convenience, when the islands are spoken of as a whole, and I have used ordinary spelling.

Even if there was anything to be gained in historical accuracy by calling St. Alphege Ælfheah, I should tax too much the patience of readers if I extended the system to other parts, if Malachi became Maelseachlainn, Mahon Mathgamlain, and Terence Torrdhealbhach. Olaf, a very common name, is spelt Olave, Amblaibh, Anlaff, Onlaf, Awley, Auliff, Amlaifh, Amlaimh, Ambaoibh.

No attempt has been made to condemn the motives or criticise the actions of the men of the times, though I am aware that it is usual to do so. It is impossible to be sure either of the motive or knowledge of the chronicler, when he is not clearly biassed.

My sincere thanks are due to my niece Miss K. E. Jeudwine for her drawings for the excellent outline maps made for me by Messrs. Emery Walker Ltd., to the Superintendent of the Library at the British Museum, and the Librarians of the Archæological Library at Taunton and the Literary and Scientific Institute at Bath, for much courtesy and for valuable assistance in the use of the libraries.

In a work which is practically a new departure, and which covers so much ground, many mistakes are inevitable.

[1] See Introductory Chapter, "The Records of the Times."

J. W. JEUDWINE.

BATHEASTON, SOMERSET,
September 1912.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

I. THE RECORDS OF THE TIMES[1]

THE author with very great diffidence puts before the reader a few particulars of some general contemporary authorities for the period covered by this volume.

There are, of course, a great variety of contemporary books on special subjects dealing with particular aspects of society during this period,[2] and every succeeding generation has produced numerous compilations and histories, antiquarian researches and philosophical inquiries, which contain the results of the investigations of learned men.

The attempt to deal with the works on special subjects, a very numerous class which vary greatly in value, would claim too much space to be attempted here; a list of later histories and authorities down to the present time will be found in most general and school histories, and many of them will be well known to the reader: this notice must be confined to those chronicles, histories, and annals of the time which professedly deal with general contemporary events.

[1] The abbreviations in the notes to this chapter referring to the English translations of authorities quoted are as follow:—

Rolls and Memorials Series	R. & M.
Church Historians of England Series . . .	Ch. Hist.
Bohn's Antiquarian Library	Bohn.
Early English Text Society	E. E. Text.

[2] Examples are the *Leechdoms Wortcunning and Starcraft of Early England*, transl. by Rev. T. Oswald Cockayne, vol. xxxv. of R. & M.; the *Liber Llandavensis*, transl. by J. W. Rees (Longmans), 1840; *The Brehon Law Tracts, Ancient Laws of Ireland*, edited by W. N. Hancock, T. O. Mahony, A. G. Richey, and R. Atkinson, Dublin 1865; and *The Lives of Saints*. See as to these last p. xxxv. *infra*.

It is impossible, though it is generally attempted, to gauge the value of most of these early authorities, as they are in great part either anonymous, or the work of men of whose history and position in political life little or nothing is known. Where the reader cannot correct or test their facts from other sources, he has alternatives before him: he may either accept as comparative truth the contemporary estimates of fact where they can be shown to be contemporary, discarding as far as may be the impossible, exercising his commonsense on the improbable, and making allowance for the theological or political animus of the narrator when anything is known about him; or he may rely on the patient investigations of the inquirers who for centuries have examined the contemporary records; or he may interest himself with the conclusions drawn by the writers of his own time. Each age unconsciously views facts with reference to its own tendencies.

The dates given in brackets are the dates of death or of the ceasing of the authority or chronicle. As after the Roman period most of them begin either with the Creation, or with the Incarnation, it is to be presumed that the only part of real value is that which approaches their own time.

The classical writers Cæsar (De Bello Gallico), Tacitus, and references in Strabo, Pliny, and others of later date, are authorities for the Roman period.

With the Romans we part for nearly 300 years from any written records which rest on contemporary authority. The destruction of the empire by barbarians unused to writing involved the loss of means for communication of thought, and in consequence in great measure of written thought itself, as the written records shrank to those matters which were of interest to the writer's own small local circle.

In a period when all life is a continuous condition of savage warfare, such written records are more easily destructible than the record of verbal tradition and memory, by fire, robbery, violence, water and more valuable uses of parchment. It is not necessary to think that men were ignorant because they have left no written records; or to suppose

that the Britons lost at once their 400 years of training under the Romans, because we have no reliable account from them of their unsuccessful stand against the invader.

All ancient written records are based on hearsay. Every report of affairs which took place twenty miles away would have come through a dozen mouths before it reached the man who wrote it down. He either wrote down the rumour as it reached him, or he enlarged on it, putting into the mouths of his characters his own feelings and wishes in connected language. This is such an essential feature that no historian from Herodotus to Froissart hesitates to write long speeches for his characters, with an origin of this double nature, expressing generally a commonly received belief or wish. So Bede puts into the mouth of Cuthbert[1] his own opinions on the Easter controversy; so Henry of Huntingdon, 1141, reports contemporary estimates of men through the earl of Chester and Baldwin FitzGilbert, and William of Malmesbury, 1013, imagines a speech of Ethelred II to the bishops and abbots.

It is with the conversion of the northern tribes to Christianity that written records come back to us. It was this "religion of a book which for the first time introduced many of the ruder nations outside the empire to the art of writing,"[2] and this art was for many centuries used for the advance of the interests of religion, and not with any idea of conserving facts for the world, or of inducing accuracy of statement.

Our first and only real authority for facts in England after the departure of the Romans,[3] is the Venerable Bede,

[1] He makes Cuthbert on his deathbed say: "Keep peace one with another, and heavenly charity. . . . But with those who err from the unity of Catholic peace, either by not celebrating Easter at the proper time, or by living perversely, have no communion."

[2] Maine's *Early Institutions*.

[3] The only general written records in the period between the departure of the Romans, about 410 (?), and the writings of Bede, about 731 (?), are the invectives of Gildas, a British monk, written in Brittany or Scotland (560), transl. in 1638, 1652, and by J. A. Giles, 1841, and Bohn (see p. 22 *infra*), and a supposed Nennius (dated variously 620 to 994), transl. by Gunn 1819, J. A. Giles 1841, and Bohn. It is probable that there was sometime early in the seventh century a person called Nennius, who wrote or edited a popular account of the Britons, incorporating among a great

a monk who spent his life in a monastery at Jarrow in Northumberland. He was born about 673 at a time when North Humbria was in the van of the intellectual life of the time, quickened by the connection with Rome resulting from the disputes which in the preceding century raged between the Anglo-Irish monks of Lindisfarne and Iona, and the Roman monks from Kent. Bede wrote numerous works; to his ecclesiastical history [1] we owe what little may be gleaned from the centuries before his birth, and great part of our knowledge of the history of his time in Great Britain.[2]

Thanks to this Northumbrian school, of which he was such a shining example, to the schools which Theodore of Tarsus founded in the seventh century, to the remains of Roman learning in Wales, and to the great monastic schools in Ireland, there was probably as much learning in Britain in these centuries as in Rome. But any use of written manuscripts appears to have been confined to the clergy, and any written literature which sprang up concerned itself mainly with the affairs of the monasteries. With the exceptions to be mentioned later, early written history was almost exclusively the work of the monks,[3] as the monastery was the only place in those days where there was safety or leisure for writing.

Writing and copying manuscripts on sheepskins was an art which formed one of the employments of the men and women in the monasteries until the invention of print-

amount of legend a few facts, and that his history was republished at intervals for 300 or 400 years. But neither this nor the *sermo flebilis* of Gildas can be used seriously for history; there is too much of impossible legend and too little of possible fact. The only facts in Nennius which would seem likely are the existence of Arthur and his battles.

[1] Three translations between 1565–1814; transl. by J. A. Giles (Lumley, 1840), J. Bohn 1840, Ch. Hist. 1853, L. Gidley 1870, T. Miller (E. E. Text, 1890), L. C. Lane (Temple Classics, 1903), A. M. Seller (Geo. Bell, 1907–1909), Ernest Rhys (Everyman's Library, 1910).

[2] In this I have given expression to the ordinary prejudice. But there is really no reason to suppose that the Irish records which cover the early period are not compiled from equally early and equally trustworthy sources. It is very likely that prior to Alfred's time a good deal of the Saxon Chronicle was copied from the MSS. from which they are compiled.

[3] Writers such as Alfred and Fabius Ethelwerd were rare exceptions.

ing took learning out of their hands. When the sheepskins were scarce, as they would sometimes be, it was not unusual to scratch out the writing not thought worth preserving, and to write the new material over it. It is to these "palimpsests" that we owe the preservation of some great ancient works,[1] which can be deciphered under the mediæval matter written over them.

Sometime after the birth of Bede, the silence of written records is broken by the Saxon Chronicle.

This was an annual register of events kept in different English monasteries by writers whose names and dates are equally unknown. This keeping of a national record in the monasteries is supposed to have been begun by Alfred,[2] in whose reign the entries are very full and interesting. It has been conjectured that he sent copies of his register to different monasteries, with the suggestion that the entries should be kept "posted." After his time the entries vary greatly in interest, sometimes becoming a mere skeleton of facts, but occasionally not only full of items of interest, but embodying them in song.

It is unlikely that we have the original of this record. Several MSS., which may be all copies of a lost original, are in existence,[3] differing slightly from each other in language or matter, except where some special entry of local interest denotes the locality of the writer. The entries are very likely somewhat in the nature of our modern news items issued by an associated press.

The chronicle extends up to the year (1154), the date of the accession of Henry II. It is written in Anglo-Saxon, a language which was then ceasing to be a living tongue, giving way, as it had no literature of its own to support it, to French as the language of officials and to Latin as the language of learned men.

Although the Saxon Chronicle is generally credited as

[1] Such as Gaius' *Institutes*, and Cicero's *De Republica*.

[2] It may very likely have begun much earlier, stimulated by the great Irish monastic literary movement of the sixth and seventh centuries.

[3] Transl. by Miss Gurney, 1819; J. Ingram (Longmans), 1823; Benjn. Thorpe (23 R. & M.), 1861; in Bohn; Rev. J. Stevenson (Ch. Hist.), 1853.

contemporary with the events which it relates, it is clearly not so in many instances; as when under date 1031, it records the accession to Normandy of "William, who was afterwards king of England."

Contemporary with it, often copying from it, and dealing with the events there related, are two historians outside the monastery of importance: Asser, the Welsh bishop who wrote a life of Alfred,[1] and Fabius Ethelwerd,[2] a prince of the Saxon dynasty of Wessex, who gives us a chronicle partly independent to close on the end of the tenth century.

From him, a soldier and layman, we learn several details which are wanting in the monastic annals. For instance, he tells us that the leader of the Northmen who conquered and settled North Humbria and East Mercia in Alfred's day was Ivar, the "Ivar the Boneless" of the Irish Annals, a chief whose sons and descendants became kings of Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick, and kings of Man in the next century.

These special details are of value, as the difficulty of compiling history from the Saxon Chronicle is increased by the vagueness of the language used. In the tenth century the names of the leaders of the Northmen, the numbers of their ships or their men, the place from which they came or to which they went, facts which if known could have given to anyone who did not despise the Irish or Scandinavian records some idea of the connection of the attack with current events in other parts of Britain are seldom mentioned. When the names are mentioned, as when under 994, the chronicler states that "Anlaf and Swegen came to London," there is no further word to show who Anlaf and Swegen were (who are here mentioned for the first time) or from whence they had come. In the same year their operations are described by saying "they rode as far as they could," they "continued doing unspeakable evil," which may mean anything.

Again in reporting the invasions, the chronicler makes

[1] Ch. Hist.; Bohn; A. S. Cook (Ginn & Co.), 1906; L. C. Lane, King's Classics, 1908.

[2] Ch. Hist.; Bohn.

frequent accusations of treachery; but as each party making a separate attack is spoken of only as "the pagan army," "an innumerable force," "a countless host," and so forth, we cannot tell if it is the same force which has been paid off which commits the next raid, or another.

"A countless host" may represent two dozen men, "an unspeakable spoil" a few cows. To the stationary reporter the man who had been defeated represents his opponents as innumerable and his loss as immense. He had taken all their points on his target, and had fought at odds for hours by Winchester clock.

There is nothing in the Saxon Chronicle at any time to suggest that the writer had been in actual touch with the Scandinavian invader, had seen him or had heard him speak.

Written as a national register rather than for general use, which would lay it open to the criticism of men who had taken part in the events recorded, or had spoken to those who had done so, the Saxon Chronicle, apart from its reputation for accuracy, and the assumption that it is frequently contemporary with the facts that it relates, is the least illustrative of the records of this period. How purely local, and how meagre was the knowledge of the reporter of the world around him, is shown by the absence of mention of the towns. Next to London, Bristol was the most noted port in the islands, the centre of the Irish trade with Wessex, and a chief port for trade with the South of France. It must have been attacked very early by the Northmen; possibly it was soon in their hands; Sweyn goes to Bath close by it to be crowned. Yet Bristol is not mentioned in these times in the Chronicle. Dublin was a most noted place, closely connected with Scotland, North Humbria, and Scandinavia. It was well known in Europe, yet it is only mentioned once as the place to which Olaf Cuaran went after Brunanburg, mentioned in such a manner as to suggest that the writer knew nothing else about it.

It is a difficulty of all reporting of wars extended over a wide area that the stationary writer from hearsay cannot

gauge the relative importance of either strategical or tactical movements, but may consider as a terrible blow an unimportant feint which results in loss, while overlooking entirely the real standpoint of the defence. As the facts reported by the Saxon Chronicle during the reign of Ethelred II, for example, are clearly only isolated events and not a whole, there is always reason to question whether the chronicler is telling us the facts of real importance, how far even the Northmen's raids after 978-9 were only ordinary occurrences such as had happened at any time in Athelstan's or Edgar's reign, or how far they really represented a new series of invasions.

The records next in date to the Saxon Chronicle, of equal authority where it is contemporary, are the Irish Annals compiled by Tighernach O'Brien,[1] a very eminent scholar, abbot of the monasteries of Clonmacnoise and Roscommon. He died in 1088.

Of these annals only four fragments are extant, the first period (*Révue Celtique*, vol. xvi. p. 374) ending in the time of Antoninus Pius; the second 143-161 A.D. (*ibid.* vol. xvii. p. 6); the third, 489-776 (*ibid.* vol. xvii. p. 119); the fourth, 973-1088, the years 1002-1017 missing (*ibid.* vol. xvii. p. 374). There was evidently a very close connection between Clonmacnoise and North Humbria; Tighernach gives the dates of Bede's works as they are written, notices the date of the founding of Lindisfarne, and the changing of Easter in Iona. There was also evidently a close connection between

[1] The treatment of Tighernach's Annals is an example of the difficulty which lies in the way of the innocent who tries to compile British history from original sources. Until 1895-97, when a new edition partially in English by Mr. Whitley Stokes was published in the *Révue Celtique* (vols. xvi., xvii., and xviii.), this greatest of Irish authorities was only accessible in an early nineteenth-century Latin translation in vol. 2 of *Rerum Hibernicarum Scriptores Veteres*, by Dr. O'Conor, who had no knowledge of the Irish language. Of this translation the eminent scholar Dr. Reeves says: "It is so corrupt, so interpolated, so blundered, that it is extremely unsafe to trust the text, while it is certain mischief to follow the translation." The *Annals of Innisfallen* still remain in O'Conor's translation, though a new edition is in course of preparation by Father McCaffey of Maynooth. While this has been the treatment of Tighernach, a life of Thomas à Becket in Icelandic is published as an authority for British history in the Rolls Series in two portly volumes.

Ireland and the Picts of Scotland, there being frequent references to Scottish affairs.

Tighernach's Annals are the first of a great series of such records from all parts of Ireland, written in Irish,[1] ranging from early times to the seventeenth century. They differ from the monastic annals of England in many respects. We generally know by whom they were written or compiled; though they were as a rule products of the monastery the authors were not always monks, but sometimes men of note in the tribes whose actions they relate; the later ones have not the same tendency to enlarge on religious affairs as the English monastic chroniclers,[2] but are more in the nature of eulogies of the tribe to which the annalist belonged, the annals of Ulster exalting the men of the north at the expense of Connaught and the south, and the annalists of Leinster and Munster replying in kind. As high courage and success in war were then the only qualities of value to the tribe, the Irish eulogist gives us the blackest side of national life, passing over the acts of peace, and the encouragement of arts which we should now think of as a cause for praise, in recounting the deeds of his hero. As a result we are accustomed to think of Irish civilisation prior to the Anglo-Norman conquest as having fallen to a lower depth than was the case in fact.

There is no comparison in literary merit between the best and most authoritative of the Irish Annals and the chronicles from the English monasteries. With exceptions all the earlier Irish accounts of events are a plain, bald, and often hideous record of facts as they occur, without any

[1] Sometimes partly in Irish and partly in Latin, as for example Tighernach "759, Occisio Eachthigion espuic a sacerdote ac altoir Brighde. Is assin connach denand sacart aiffrind in conspectu episcobi o sin ille a Cilldara." Transl. 759: "The slaying of Echthigern, a bishop, by a priest at Brigit's altar. Hence from that time forward no priest performs mass at Kildare in the presence of a bishop."—*Révue Celtique*, vol. xvii. This *may be* rather an extreme example.

[2] But like the English annalists, they attribute plague to providence, *e.g.* Tighernach "1044; Clonacnois was plundered by the Connacin. But God and St. Ciarin inflicted vengeance first upon them; and the greater part of their men and their cattle died." If it had not been for this belief in pestilence as the immediate divine vengeance, no monastery in any country would have remained intact.

attempt to make their digestion easier by introducing foreign matter of diversion, as when William of Malmesbury writes many pages of nonsense about a compact between the great Pope Gerbert and the Devil, as matter of greater interest to his readers than an attempt to tell clearly the story of Ethelred II. No one will read them except in the hope of finding facts which will elucidate early history.

Most of these Irish Annals as we now possess them were edited from old MSS. which have disappeared in the course of the various disturbances in Ireland. The most important are those of Tighernach, the *Annals of the Monastery of Innisfallen*,[1] which still remain in O'Conor's translation, the *Annals of Ulster*,[2] compiled by three separate writers to (1498), (1541) and (1604),[3] the *Annals of Loch Ce*[4] in Roscommon from 1014 to (1636), the *Chronicon Scotorum*[5] to (1135), compiled by the antiquary Donald McFirbis the hereditary historian of the O'Dubhda in Sligo in 1636, the *Annals of Clonmacnoise*,[6] and the *Annals of Donegal, or, of the Four Masters*,[7] compiled in the seventeenth century by the O'Clerys, who were the hereditary professors of history to the O'Donnels. Annals of less value but of great interest are the wars of the Gaedhill with the Gaill,[8] an eulogy of the Munster tribe of the Dalcais by a contemporary of the battle of Clontarf.

In the Irish Annals, written by men loving the adventurous spirit, and condoning the violence which kept pace with fearless action, the vagueness of detail of the Saxon

[1] In Latin in *Rerum Hibern. Script.* by O'Conor.

[2] The Latin in *Rerum Hibern.* as above. In English by W. M. Hennessy, 4 vols. Stationery Office, Dublin, 1887.

[3] These annals were apparently compiled like the Saxon Chronicle from entries derived from different monasteries—evidence that the entries are coeval with the events narrated is supplied not only by the antiquity of the Irish grammatical forms, but by the accuracy of the solar and lunisolar entries. Thus in 664 a solar eclipse is correctly reported which Bede reports incorrectly. *Annals of Ulster*, edit. 1901, vol. iv. ch. 4.

[4] By W. M. Hennessy, R. & M.

[5] By W. M. Hennessy, *ibid.*, vol. xlvi.

[6] Transl. in 1627 from lost Irish records. Edited by C. Mageoghagan (Kilkenny Archælogical Society), 1896.

[7] By O'Connellan, 1846. By J. O'Donovan (Hodges & Smith), 1848-51.

[8] By Rev. J. H. Todd, R. & M. vol. xlviii.

Chronicle to a great extent disappears. The men and women who fought and suffered are real to us; their names, the place and particulars of combat are supplied; we can sometimes trace through them as descendants of a past generation the successive waves of Norse invasion and settlement; they enable us to picture a moving story. There would not seem to be any reason to suppose that they are less accurate than the Wessex records.

As illustrating the method of these compilations and the reason for believing in their probable accuracy and impartiality, the *Annals of the Four Masters* originated by the guardian of the Convent at Louvain in which was Michael O'Clery, sending him in 1620 to Ireland to collect Irish MSS. O'Clery travelled and collected them for many years. Then with three others he wrote the annals in the convent, of Donegal, from 1632-1636. The guardian of the convent, in his approbation of the work, mentions the chief MSS. used by the compilers, some of which are still extant.

Thus, even if we have not the original MSS. of these annals, we have good reason to believe that in most respects they are faithful copies of contemporary or nearly contemporary originals. We often know the names of the compilers and the sources of their information, and that they were eminent men of learning. The accuracy of their observation of natural phenomena is very remarkable; in the *Annals of Ulster* there are a great many such observations which when verified prove to be of striking accuracy; and this in itself entitles their statements to be received with great respect, as showing that they had before them accounts from early MSS. now lost, and were not, like the later Benedictine chroniclers of England, mere enlargements by way of plagiarism on an ancient authority.

The authorities for Pictland or Scotland are almost non-existent up to the time of Stephen; the Pictish chronicle dated by Mr. Skene 977-995, and some other small records of early Pictish and Scottish history, have been collected by Mr. Skene into a volume of the R. & M., Scotland: towards the close of the period they are represented by two monastic

annals, the *Chronicon S. Crucis Edinburghensis* (Holyrood)[1] and the *Chronicle of the Abbey of Melrose.*[2] Holyrood was only founded in 1138, but the chronicle may be based in its earlier parts on independent MSS.

The Welsh authorities are the *Annales Cambriæ,*[3] a very scanty register of names and dates, and the Brut y Twysogion (1156),[4] generally attributed to one Caradoc of Llancarvan. Its statements frequently conflict with the Saxon Chronicle. There is a *Chronicle of the Isle of Man,*[5] written in Latin, which begins in the year 1000, and throws light on the relations of that island with the other parts of Britain.

The chief authorities outside the British Isles, up to the time of the Norman Conquest, records which are very valuable and noteworthy, are the Scandinavian Sagas or stories of the kings of Norway.

These are records of a very different character and with a very different history from the monastic annals. They are stories of active life told by men of action, pictures of the society of the time, men and women, reflecting in the narrative all the little touches of personal incident and family life which make up society in all times.

The constant presence of women which is so entirely absent from the monastic chronicle, except as furies or as devoted to the religious life, is a characteristic.

In the long winter evenings, when the Northmen rested from their trading expeditions and raids, they passed the time telling stories of their feats at sea and on land. The wild imaginative incident which formed the matter for these stories had sufficient interest in itself without calling for the help of supernatural effect or the inventive powers of the narrator. The stories passed from mouth to mouth, growing no doubt in brilliancy of incident and expression, until they were written down. This happened when Chris-

[1] Ch. Hist. [2] *Ibid.*
[3] R. & M. vol. xx. Latin, Rev. J. Williams, ab Ithel.
[4] Rev. J. Williams, ab Ithel, R. & M. vol. xvii.; by Aneurin Owen (Cambrian Archæological Society), 1863.
[5] James Johnstone, 1786; V.P.A. Munch (Manx Society), 1860; Ch. Hist. 1858.

tianity, "the religion of a book," conquered Scandinavia, bringing writing into general use. Iceland was the chief seat of this early literature which was committed to writing from 1100 or thereabouts.

Aude "the deeply wealthy," the widow of Olaf the White (see p. 114), after his death and the death of her son Thorstein the Red, left Ireland, and went with all her family and her possessions to Iceland, as told in the Laxdæla Saga, stopping only on the way at the Orkneys and the Faroes to marry her grand-daughters. From her family, which became very prominent in Iceland, was descended one Are-Frode or the Wise (born 1067), who first systematically collected and wrote down some of these stories in Icelandic, compiling the Konunga Book, or book of kings, which is supposed to be identical with the *Ynglinga Saga*, the Landnama Bok, which treats of the first occupation of Iceland by the Norwegians, telling of the laws and customs of these Northmen, and the Islendinga Bok, an account of the introduction of Christianity.[1] It is supposed that these sagas were first written down about 1110. A contemporary who worked on the same lines is Soemund Frode (born 1056, died 1133).

Others followed Are, as the later monastic chroniclers in the revival of letters followed the Saxon Chronicle.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century Snorre Sturleson (1178-1241) composed and put into literary form the longer sagas, which he called the sagas or stories of kings of Norway;[2] Sturla (born about 1214) made a

[1] Transl. in vol. i of *Origines Islandicæ*, by Vigfusson and Powell (Clarendon Press), 1905.

[2] The following are the principal translations of the Scandinavian records, so far as they throw light on British history or afford an insight into the habits of the Northmen:—Snorre Sturleson's *Lives of the Kings of Norway* (called by Laing the *Heimskringla* or *World's Circle*), translated by Samuel Laing, edited by Samuel Anderson (Nimmo, 1889), also in vols. iii.–vi. of the Saga Library by W. Morris and E. Magnusson (Quaritch, 1891–5); *Origines Islandicæ*, transl. by G. Vigfusson and F. York Powell (Clarendon Press, 1905), contains Landnama Bok, and a number of important sagas including Erbyggia Saga, Laxdæla Saga, Gisla Saga, Vatzdæla Saga, the Wineland Voyages, &c. &c.; *Orkneyinga Saga*, *Magnus Saga*, *Hakonar Saga*, R. & M. vol. lxxxviii.; *The Story of Burnt Nial*, by Sir G. W. Dasent, 1900; *Egils Saga*, by Rev. W. C. Green (Elliot Stock, 1893); *The Saga of Hen Thorir*, by G. Magnusson and W. Morris (Byway Press, 1903); *Laxdæla Saga*, by M. A. C. Press (Temple Classics, 1899); The Northern

further collection. The same fate attended the original MSS. of these sagas as those of the Irish Annals or the Saxon Chronicle; fire, damp, and carelessness, the use of them for shoemaking and bookbinding, consumed the parchments until hardly any remained.

Towards the end of the seventeenth century one Arni Magnusson collected in Iceland all the scraps that he could find, and carried them to Norway for deposit in the public libraries.

Like the enlargements of the Saxon Chronicle mentioned below, the historical value of these records diminishes as they are improved on, enlarged and put into literary form. Yet though they are so very late in time, their historical value is very great, as the theological animus, the determination to fit the facts to the necessary moral, which so often disturbs the judgment of the monastic chronicler, is absent from records of which the framework is simply a story of adventure.

They give us the story of the "pagan army" from the point of view of the explorer and geographer, the ocean pioneer and merchant trader. They tell us the social life at home of the men who invaded and colonised at least one half of Britain.

But their historical value is not all. "Poetry, history, laws, social institutions and usages, many of the useful arts, and all the elements of civilisation and freedom were existing among them in those ages in much greater vigour than among the Anglo-Saxons themselves."

In the dullest of all periods of European fancy, when the Celtic tales of Arthur and the poetry of the Romance peoples had not as yet reawakened the imagination deadened by the horrors of monastic martyrdom, the harp of the Norse Scald drove the evil spirit from the soul of the fighting-man.

Library, containing the *Olaf Trygvasson Saga*, *Færeyinga Saga*, the *Ambales Saga*, and the *Saga King Sverri* (David Nutt, 1895–99); *Gretti's Saga*, by E. Magnusson and W. Morris (Longmans & Co., 1900–1901); by E. Magnusson (Orkney and Shetland Society, 1910); *Concise History of Iceland*; *An Epitome of Islandinga Saga*, by Jon. G. Palmeson, 1906.

Other continental authorities of importance, where they can be consulted, are the writings of Adam of Bremen, a northern geographer and traveller,[1] who wrote about 1080, and a history of Denmark in Latin written from Danish sagas by Saxo Grammaticus,[2] a Danish monk who died in 1204.

There is one more separate source of information which requires mention, the lives of Saints. Some few of these contain interesting facts bearing both on social and political history apart from their intrinsic literary merit. Examples are Eadmer's *Life of Anselm*, Adamnan's *Life of Columba*, Bede's *Life of Cuthbert*, Turgot's *Life of St. Margaret*, some early lives of Dunstan and Patrick—lives written by contemporaries who knew the subject of the biography or by men living close to the time. But the very large majority of Saints' lives were written by men who lived many years or centuries after the times of which they wrote, and wrote not as enthusiastic followers of the man delineated, but with a set purpose for which the biography made a framework.[3] It is hard to conceive anything more dull, more irritating, more depressing than these productions. The same old imitative miracles reappear in each;[4] the same follies and villainies which are the excuses for them are reproduced; the same misrepresentations of fact. Sometimes there may be a grain of wheat of the writer's own time among all this chaff, but one has to be very long-lived to spend time making the extractions.

The values of the contemporary materials vary, as we look for accuracy in date or matter of fact, for artistic elaboration of incident, or for intelligent comment.

Each record is in itself imperfect for a complete history of the islands, as each narrator, whether a monk in a

[1] See for Adam of Bremen, Beazley's *Dawn of Modern Geog.*, vol. ii.

[2] The first nine books transl. by O. Ettin (D. Nutt, 1894), early period.

[3] As, for instance, Jocelyn's *Life of St. Kentigern*, written at the end of the twelfth century, 600 years after the Saint's death, or Osbeorn's, Eadmer's, or Wm. of Malmesbury's *Lives of Dunstan*.

[4] For instance, in Osbeorn's *St. Dunstan*, a noble lady offers to entertain Athelstan's court. It is found that she has not enough mead. In imitation of Cana of Galilee the virgin provides the mead.

monastery, a lawyer or bard attached to a tribe, or a Viking telling stories in the long nights of an arctic winter, treats only of those events which concerned his own race and his own locality and tells the story from the point of view of his own people. But these records supplement and correct one another, so that we are enabled by comparing them to check their inaccuracies and exaggerations, and to fill in the blank spaces of their stories. A reader of the Saxon Chronicle would learn from the sagas that in the tenth century the ship raids were of daily occurrence in Scandinavia. Taken by themselves the monastic records of England give a very lop-sided view of British or even English history; read with the annals of Ireland, the sagas of Scandinavia, and the records of other parts they form a fairly complete story.

Each record has its own characteristic entries. The English monastic chronicles pay much attention to affairs of abbeys and monasteries, the appointment of bishops and abbots. For instance, under the year 1014, when Ethelred had been driven out and all England had fallen under the pagan Sweyn, when it would be supposed men's hearts were deeply concerned for the future of the unhappy country and the Christian Church, the Saxon Chronicle tells how the abbot of Peterborough who had gone to Normandy with Emma went to Bonneval "where St. Florentine's body lay. There he found a poor place, a poor abbot and poor monks, for they had been plundered." He bought the body "all but the head" for £500. It was clear that Peterboro had not been plundered. The one fact which is conspicuous in the English annals of that time is that the country then grew daily richer in spite of the Scandinavian raids.

Owing to their remoteness from Roman discipline, the language of the Irish chroniclers is more that of men of action such as the English monastic writers became in the twelfth century. They are more concerned with the "hostings" of their tribe than with the sanctity of their churches and convents. They illustrate their accounts of events by occurrences of common life which would not occur to the recluse within the walls of the monastery. Games of chess

are mentioned; the spoils of Sulcoit are described as "beautiful and foreign saddles," "beautifully woven cloth of all colours," "satins and silks, scarlet and green." Speaking of the destruction of a tribe, a writer describes it as so complete "that there should not be of them a man to guide a horse's head over a channel."

The Scandinavian sagas, stories written down in the national tongue for general use, either to be recited or read by men interested in a life of action and adventure, deal with the trivial interests which make up social life.

In the Olaf Trygvasson saga, it is told how when in Ireland Olaf was driving to his ships a prey of cows and sheep, a poor Irishman begs him to let him have back his few animals; "it is impossible," says Olaf, "they cannot be separated." "Only let me put in my dog," said the Irishman, "he will separate them." "Very well, but don't delay our march." The dog goes in at his master's order, threads his way among the crowd of frightened beasts, picks out and rounds up his master's cattle, bringing them, all marked with his mark, from the rest of the herd. Olaf does not come from a sheep country and does not know the ways of sheep dogs. He is struck with wonder and buys the man's dog for a heavy gold ring. When Magnus Barfod and the kings of Sweden and Denmark held a conference at Nidaros they cut three crosses in the church door to show their heights (they were all very tall men), "and which crosses each one of them could with the greatest ease kiss." When Olaf the Saint had been cutting wood with his knife on Sunday, the servant maid reminds him that Monday is to-morrow, whereupon the saint calls for a candle and lighting the shavings burns them on his hand as a penance Asta's boys Guthorm and Halfdan amuse themselves building great houses and barns in their play, while Harold (afterwards Harold Hardrada) sails chips of wood on the edge of a pool.

The drawings of character come in as part of the story, away from all political and theological bias. "He got in his hay quicker than other men—he was also so lucky with his stock that he never lost stock by starving or deadly

snowstorms—it was often found that he knew more about the look of the weather than other folks—he was not a moneyed man but kept a gainsome stock—he was a man of such indifference that his enemies said that he had a woman's temper rather than a man's."

The sagas picture to us a poor mountainous country, where all men lived a rough frugal life, doing hard work from the king to the slave, and drinking hard in all classes, thinking drunkenness no shame. King Sigurd, the stepfather of Olaf the Saint, is described as "a careful householder, who kept his people closely to their work, and often went about himself to inspect his cornrigs and meadow land, the cattle and also the smith work." When he entertains Olaf the Saint his dress as he comes from the field is "a blue kirtle and blue breeches; shoes which were laced about the legs; a grey cloak and a grey wide-brimmed hat; a veil" to keep off mosquitoes "before his face; a staff in his hand with a silver gilt head on it, and a silver ring around it." He and Asta entertained Olaf and his men "day about, one day with fish and milk, the other day with flesh meat and ale." The envoy to Sweden about a marriage goes to see the king's daughter to her house "where she sat at the drinking table with many men." He discusses the matter with her, and "they sat there till late in the day drinking." We are told of the condition of the slaves under a good master; they were allowed, after their task work was done, to work for themselves in the long arctic summer twilight on land given to them to sow corn in, and to buy their freedom with the proceeds; and the master teaches his freedmen handicrafts, and to work in the herring fishery.

The sagas give detailed particulars of the ships and their buildings, their crews, their fittings, the way of handling them and the tactics at sea; they describe battles as told by an eyewitness clearly and in detail; the weapons, the armour, the reindeer cloaks, the luck and accident, are given in simple and natural language. And throughout they draw a picture of democratic society in its extremest

form, such as it would not appear that we have otherwise ever known, a democracy in which the authority of the king was fully acknowledged, while he freely consulted and confided in his people who spoke their minds openly to his face. Probably the actual words of the speeches at the Thing or popular assembly are as much literary productions as those in the Latin Chronicles of Wessex; but unlike these latter they ring true; their matter, told in simple and graphic words, is in accord with human nature and probable facts.

The kings of Norway and Sweden have a long standing quarrel which leads to border warfare and ravage, a quarrel which the Swedish king refuses to end. "Now it is our will," says Lagman (Judge) Thorgny to King Olaf of Sweden at the Upsala Thing, "now it is our will, we bondes" (landowners and freemen), "that thou King Olaf make peace with the Norway King Olaf the thick and marry thy daughter Ingigerd to him. . . . But if thou wilt not do as we desire we will now attack thee and put thee to death; for we will no longer suffer law and peace to be disturbed. . . . Now tell us in all haste what resolution thou wilt take." When he fails to carry out his promise given to do their will, they depose him.

The bounds of the powers of king and people were well defined. When either party overstepped the limit, where the king attempted largely to abuse his authority, or the bondes to restrict it, we have a picture of the savagery and treachery and cold-blooded murder and torture which accompany all revolutions; and no less is the savagery shown in the revolution of religion, the introduction of the Christian faith in the place of the Pagan.

These sagas are no less applicable to Britain than to Scandinavia and Iceland. For three hundred years a very large part of our islands was in the possession of the Northmen; their history during that time was our history; nor is there any reason to suppose that with the departure of their political predominance the Scandinavian blood has disappeared either from any part of England, Western or Northern Scotland, Man, Anglesey or Ireland.

All the records contain fabulous matter, which must be disentangled from the facts. When in contemporary records miraculous agency is not introduced in such a manner as to affect character, and distort facts, it is very harmless and easily detached. It does not seriously affect the credit of the Irish stories of Clontarf when they tell us that the hero Murrogh (Murchadh) fought in that Homeric battle with a sword in each hand, that he killed fifty men with his right hand, and fifty men with his left hand, and that the handle of his sword became red hot and melted. Nor does the credit of the Saxon Chronicle suffer, because on the first appearance of the Northmen, fiery dragons were seen flying in the air.[1]

But during the eleventh century there came about a great increase of the recording of annals in all monasteries, and after the Norman Conquest of England that part of the islands was invaded by a class of professional monastic historians, who wrote "histories" in Latin, practising plagiarism, and enlargement on the Saxon Chronicle, imitating the classical authors of antiquity, and copying each freely from their contemporaries, or from their immediate predecessors.

Among such writers during the civil wars of Stephen's reign are Florence,[2] a monk of Worcester who wrote a revised and extended edition[3] of the Saxon Chronicle down to (1141), founded on the work of Marianus Scotus, an Irishman (born 1028; see Florence under that date); William of Malmesbury[4] (1142), a writer in the best Latin style of the day, Henry, archdeacon of Huntington[5] (1145), and the anonymous author of an account of Stephen's wars called Gesta Stephani[6] (1147). Of these men we know practically nothing except their names. For the north of Great Britain

[1] Tighernach (anno 745) records the same prodigy: "Dracones in caelo visi sunt."

[2] Transl. Ch. Hist.; Bohn.

[3] For instance, the entries (anno 876) in the Saxon Chronicle (Ch. Hist.), eleven lines, are expanded in Florence to twenty-eight lines.

[4] Transl. J. Sharp (Longman, 1815); Ch. Hist.; Bohn; R. & M.

[5] Transl. Bohn.

[6] Transl. Ch. Hist.; Bohn.

at this time we have Simeon of Durham,[1] who copied from Bede Asser and Florence, John of Hexham,[2] who continued his chronicle, and Richard of Hexham.[2]

Among other writers of this time who give us special and local particulars, and who write in a more elaborate and classical style than the Saxon Chronicle are Eadmer (1124), a monk of Canterbury the biographer of Anselm, Robert de Monte[3] (1137), who wrote a laudatory life of Henry I, and Ordericus Vitalis[4] (1141), one of the most reliable of all this class of historians, a monk born in Shropshire, resident abroad.

There are also a series of annals kept in the English abbeys, the entries in most cases being copied from some common authority or from each other like our daily press at the present day.[5]

In consequence of the straightforwardness and simplicity of the Saxon Chronicle, and the fact that it was the only contemporary authority in England for pre-Norman times, it became the common authority on which all these later English annalists could paint and embroider, filling in the bare canvas of the chronicle with fine language, with imaginary incident, living on its reputation for truthfulness, embodying as the groundwork of their efforts of the imagination the bare facts scattered through its pages.

As an example of this gradual addition of incident in a story, I would instance the account of the "Massacre of St. Brice" in 1002. There appears to have been a conspiracy on the part of some Scandinavians, probably those who had been paid off and retained as Ethelred's auxiliaries, to kill

[1] Transl. Ch. Hist.
[2] Ch. Hist.; Surtees Society, 1864-5.
[3] Transl. Ch. Hist. [4] Transl. Ch. Hist.; Bohn.
[5] The following records of abbeys and monasteries are published in the R. & M., vol. ii., Abingdon; 28, St. Albans; 33, St. Peter's, Gloucester; 36, Margan, Tewkesbury, Burton, Winchester, Waverley, Dunstaple, Bermondsey, Oxeney, Chronicon Thos. Wykes, Priory of Worcester; 29, Evesham; 43, Melsa; 45, Hyde; 72, Malmesbury; 79, Ramsey; 80, St. Mary's, Dublin, with the register of its house at Dunbrody, Wexford, and *Annals of Ireland*, 1162-1370; 83, Ramsey; 85, Ch. Ch.; 94. St. Thomas the Martyr, Dublin; 96, St. Edmunds; 97, Sarum, 1100-1300. A great proportion of these are later than the period comprised in this volume. They copy freely from one another or from some common source.

him and his officers and to make themselves masters of the country. Such a conspiracy was a very likely one; it is taken by the chronicler as a matter of course; he makes no suggestion of panic or false alarm. An order to kill these men (men only) was given, and the order is entered in the Saxon Chronicle in this manner: "In that year the king ordered all the Danish men who were in England to be slain. This was done on St. Brice's day (15th November); because it was known to the king that they would treacherously bereave him of his life, and afterwards all his Witan; and after that have his kingdom without any gainsaying." In Florence of Worcester's Latin enlargement this becomes "all the Danes who were in England, both great and small, of either sex."

Later chroniclers enlarge on this. Henry of Huntingdon adds as an alternative to putting them to the sword that the Danes were burnt on the spot. Others describe even more gruesome horrors. John of Wallingford (thirteenth century) relates that: "Some women had their breasts cut off; others were buried alive in the ground; while the children were dashed in pieces against posts and stones."

William of Malmesbury invents a most elaborate story of the death of one Gunhilda,[1] the sister of Sweyn, and the wife of Pallig, a Dane who had deserted from Ethelred just before the massacre, and was possibly the cause of it. He describes her husband and son being killed before her eyes, placing the event eleven years later (1013).

The only one possible ground for believing that these horrible particulars happened, and were omitted from the Saxon Chronicle, would be that the chronicle was censored simultaneously in all the monasteries. In days when life was very dull tales of horror and martyrdom were told for pastime. In our own time, people who have few amusements spend much time reading papers which contain very full details of horrible happenings, though it is questionable

[1] William of Malmesbury is eleven years out in his date. May he not have confused the entry in the Saxon Chronicle under date 1045, "and in this year was driven out Gunnilde, the noble woman, King Cnut's niece."

if even they would read through Dante's *Inferno*. A very brutal murder-case appreciably increases the circulation of all sensational papers. In Ethelred's time, if no horrors were related, it would be because there would be none to tell. It would not be in the nature of the chronicler either to omit them or to soften them. We may safely assume that the horrors which were not painted in the Saxon Chronicle existed only in the imaginations of the twelfth century writers who enlarged on it. The story lost nothing in the telling.[1]

An interesting example of harmless enlargement on a bare outline will appear from a comparison of the Saxon Chronicle with Henry archdeacon of Huntingdon (twelfth century), when describing the difficulty at the beginning of the eleventh century of meeting the mobile forces of the Northmen when they did not know the point of attack. The Saxon Chronicle sums up the difficulty in the simple and graphic phrase: "When they were eastwards, then were the forces kept westward; and when they were southwards, then were our forces northwards."

Henry of Huntingdon enlarges upon it in this manner: "It is wonderful how, when the English kings were hastening to encounter them in the eastern districts, before they could fall in with the enemies' bands, a hurried messenger would arrive and say: 'Sir King, whither are you marching? The heathens have disembarked from a countless fleet on the southern coast, and are ravaging the towns and villages, carrying fire and slaughter into every quarter.' The same day another messenger would come running, and say: 'Sir King, whither are you retreating? A formidable army has landed in the West of England, and if you do not quickly turn your faces towards them they will think you are fleeing, and follow in your rear with fire and sword.'

[1] Yet these monastic fancies are generally stated as facts in our histories. In a very authoritative English History for school use this is thus related: "Though contemptible in the field, with the craft and cruelty of a weak mind, Ethelred planned the massacre of all the Danes in Wessex. . . . Among other victims was a sister of Swegen's, who had become a Christian; she was put to death with circumstances of unusual barbarity," &c. &c.

Again the same day, or on the morrow, another messenger would arrive, saying: 'What place, O noble chiefs, are you making for? The Danes have made a descent in the north; already they have burnt your mansions; even now they are sweeping away your goods; they are tossing your young children raised on the points of their spears;[1] your wives, some they have forcibly dishonoured, others they have carried off with them'"; and so on, and so on. And as the conclusive cause of these misfortunes he asserts that people had ceased to go into monasteries.

From every point of view the accounts given by these twelfth-century historians of events occurring before their own time should be regarded with the deepest distrust. In this respect they are almost valueless except as literary models. Their very style, the amplification by verbiage of the simple entries of the contemporary, tells against historical proportion. But there is another reason for this distrust: their desire to connect the result of events with moral principles. Among a people who knew no law but force, they upheld, in history as in science, the moral law at the expense of historical truth.

The effect of the Roman discipline, which made of the monk a man apart from national life, wrapped up in the success of the Church as a political organisation, taught him to look at facts as of value only so far as they bore on the safety of mankind through the Church; as abstract truth facts were nothing; behind the concrete fact there is generally apparent the desire to turn the fact to good moral account, to impress the belief that the heavy-footed limping vengeance of the deity sooner or later overtook the evil man who despised the authority of the Church. In consequence there is always the tendency to present only those facts which will admit of the necessary moral, and they were in consequence so presented, instinctively perhaps at first, afterwards from interest, as to draw the necessary

[1] This is an old fiction which is used by all in turn to the days of William Wallace. The Northmen used short javelins, but not as a rule spears on which it would be convenient to toss children, nor would they have time to do so.

moral, failure and defeat in this world being connected with disobedience to monastic precepts, niggardliness in giving, or some act of violence of which the historian did not approve.[1] And such conclusions to be effective gradually came to be supported in the history by miracle and by prophecy recorded after the event.[2]

There is still another cause for distrust. The Roman monk very early took up in England the position for which from his superior learning and diplomacy he was highly qualified, of prime minister and political adviser to the lay ruler. As a result, those periods in which his authority had been in the ascendant (as in the reign of Edgar of Wessex) were described as times of unexampled material prosperity, while he dissociates himself from national distress and want of success by suggesting that the ruler had either taken a line of his own, and flouted the Church, or had been an evil or an incapable man.

Here the English and Irish monastic annals part company, affording us good reason to understand why the Roman priesthood which upheld the overlord against the tribal chief, vanquished the Church which rested on the

[1] William of Malmesbury (1102) tells how Robert FitzHamon struck on the temples with a lance loses his mind, "thus deservedly punished because, for the sake of liberating him, King Henry had consumed the city of Bayeux, together with the principal church, by fire"; (1140) Robert FitzHubert surprised the castle of Devizes; but, as he refused to give it up to William's patron, Robert of Gloucester, "divine vengeance overtook him through the agency of one John FitzGilbert," and he is hanged by Robert of Gloucester. Henry of Hunt: (1135) William archbishop of Canterbury, who had sworn allegiance to Matilda, consecrates Stephen: he dies within the year as a judgment. (1143) Robert Marmion and Godfrey de Mandeville had fortified monasteries. Blood exuded from the walls. "See here the just judgment of God." Both men were killed in battle, the son of Godfrey was taken prisoner, and the leader of his horsemen was thrown and killed. The commander of the foot-soldiers crossing the sea, the miracle of Jonah is imitated: the ship refuses to move with him, and he is put out and drowned.

(1107) When Duke Robert is defeated by Henry I at Tenchebrai, the event is explained by Henry of Hunt: "Thus the Lord took vengeance on Duke Robert: because when he had exalted him to great glory in the holy wars, he rejected the offer of the kingdom of Jerusalem." Malmesbury writes in the same vein.

[2] As, for instance, the prophecies of Dunstan about Ethelred, recorded after his death by William of Malmesbury as made at his baptism, and by Florence as made at his coronation.

tribe as its foundation, and why for centuries the kings fell before it and hesitated to quarrel with it. It represented even at its worst the supremacy of the moral law. But the influences which operated to distort historical perspective in the English was apparently entirely wanting in the Irish monastic annals of the twelfth century.[1] The great Irish civilisation which had done so much to give Christian faith to the rest of Britain and to Western Europe, was crumbling to dust; its Church had lost not only all political power, but the power of restraining society from the most flagrant crimes against itself; the tribe as a unit had ceased to be even a basis for social morals. The plundering of churches, insults and crimes against clerics and nuns, pass with no adverse comment and without any suggestion of evil consequences to the perpetrator from Divine Providence.

But for this very reason—that there is apparently no hind thought underlying their statements of fact—the Irish annalists who recorded the events of the past (as we have good reason to believe from contemporary documents) would seem to be well worth collating with other sources of information as authorities, not only for their own time, but for the centuries preceding them.

Unfortunately all early English history, and through England a great part of British history, has been written exclusively through the spectacles of the twelfth-century English Benedictines. After the Norman Conquest the Saxon tongue fell into disuse as a literary medium, and the Irish and Scandinavian languages were unknown to the monastic writers, who looked for their inspiration solely to the classical authors of Rome. Latin became, and has since continued to be, the language of learned men, and history has been written from the Latin annals of the English monks to the exclusion of all others.

When these writers failed to find in the bare outline of the Saxon Chronicle sufficient causes for past events, they supplied them either by a handling of the facts to support a moral, attributing national prosperity to the lay ruler taking

[1] See Chap. XXV. *infra*.

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the advice of the cleric, and national misfortune to his neglecting it; or they expanded the narrative with imaginary details and misleading and magniloquent language, ignoring the affairs of other countries which might have afforded a rational explanation.

It has been, to say the least, a very great misfortune that English history has been written from this very narrow standpoint, especially in books written for schools. The compilers of later periods have followed the example of the earlier, and English history has accordingly suffered a grave loss of accuracy and just proportion, and has too often only resolved itself into adverse criticism of past kings and other prominent persons on very insufficient evidence.

In case this estimate of the mischief caused by exclusively following these authorities should seem to be exaggerated, an example is given of the material still used as the foundation for history. The Saxon Chronicle under the years 958–975, engrossed by the controversies between monks and clerks, gives no further account of foreign relations in Edgar's reign than that he "outlandish men hither enticed." It mentions the ravaging of Cumbria by Thored in 966, and of Thanet by Edgar in 968, but of naval matters it says nothing, except that in 972 Edgar, after being crowned at Bath, "led all his ship forces to Chester," and "there came to meet him six kings, and they all plighted their troth to him that they would be his fellow-workers by sea and by land," a confederation, under Edgar's overlordship, against foreign foes.

The Saxon Chronicle says (958) that Edgar "succeeded to the kingdom as well of the West Saxons as of the Mercians and of the Northumbrians," leaving outside his authority Wales and Cumbria, Scotland, the Norse colonies of the Isles, Man, and Ireland. Florence of Worcester (died 1118), whose chronicle has been taken by our historians as of almost equal value with the Saxon Chronicle, copies these statements, except that he confines Edgar's kingdom to Wessex and Mercia, which is probably correct, as his

authority over North Humbria must have been very weak. So far there is nothing inconsistent with what we know of this reign from other sources. But Florence goes on to say (under 975, the year of Edgar's death), "he collected during his life a fleet of 3600 stout ships; after Easter in every year he used to make 1200 of them assemble on the east, 1200 on the west, and 1200 on the north shore of the island; he would then sail to the western with the eastern fleet, and sending that back would sail to the northern with the western fleet, and dismissing it, in turn would sail with the northern fleet back to the western (William of Malmesbury says the eastern): thus every summer he used to sail round the whole island, performing this brave feat by way of defence against the foreigners, and for the purpose of inuring himself and his subjects to war."

The annals of those parts of Britain which would be most affected by this naval activity of the Basileus are ominously silent as to this wonderful arrangement. Tighernach only mentions under 974, "Etgair ri Saxon religiossus rex mortuus est"; the *Annales Cambriæ* notice only his no doubt historical "ship force" at Chester. The sagas do not notice it. The fact was impossible.

There were only two means of performing this "brave feat" of sailing aimlessly about the islands: either that the king should pay the expense out of his own pocket, or that the fleets should repay themselves in the usual way by plunder. The expense of these summer manœuvres would alone negative the story, unless Edgar and Dunstan went yearly on a piratical plundering expedition round the Orkneys, a policy impossible for them, though natural enough for the Irish or Scottish Northmen. Edgar would withdraw from the country at the busiest time some 70,000 men; he would have to feed them, provisioning the boats with goats and eels, and when he came north of Chester would have to buy or steal his food from the Northmen of the Isles; as he could not sail except directly before the wind, half or more of the expedition would have to be done

by rowing; as soon as he had left the Thames or the Severn and was risking his ships and men round the Land's End or the hostile cliffs of the Welsh coast, the pirate from Flanders or Ireland, or the Northmen already in the rivers as traders would raid the country safely; he would be certain to lose many ships, and many men by disease. If he committed such an idiotic action, it would fully account for the fall of the Saxon kingdom.

This bombast would be of no consequence if our eminent English historians were not so entirely under the sole influence of these chroniclers, and had not accepted this stuff and plenty like it as English history.

In an authoritative advanced history of England (1895) it is stated: "Every summer saw Edgar inspecting his fleet and arranging for a complete circumnavigation of the coast with a view to the suppression of piracy." Two pages later the writer naïvely says of Ethelred's reign: "For some unexplained reason Edgar's fleet seems to have disappeared." Another well-known public school history says with a slightly better appreciation of the position: "Through their friendship (the Northmen of Ireland), the king was enabled to keep up a powerful fleet which constantly sailed round the coasts and kept them free from foreign invasion." It was against (among others) these Northmen of Ireland that the confederation was directed. Maccus plundered them in the very next year after his agreement with Edgar. People never sailed about aimlessly in those days unless there was plunder to be obtained.

The general histories, as a rule, nibble round Florence's story, making use of it to glorify Edgar and Dunstan without tying themselves to his figures, but ignoring the absurdity of this yearly collection of the labouring population of Wessex to row round the coast as a fact in itself, in face of the possession by the Northmen of all the north-west of the islands.

Mr. Freeman (*Norman Conquest*, 1, 65, 67) says "Eadgar, like Alfred, knew how to guard his empire, and a fleet which yearly sailed round the whole island and which often

carried the king in person, was a sufficient safeguard of Britain against foreign foes."

Mr. Green, the most practical of all the great English historians, repeats the story (*Conq. of Eng.*, p. 350), merely remarking that "we need not accept every detail of the story," but that "it may be taken as showing the continuance of the naval system which had begun under Elfred." Alfred built a few ships and manned them with Frisians out of his own pocket. But that he had any "naval system" would appear to be as mythical as Edgar's circumnavigation. Certainly Alfred would never have done so foolish a thing as to sail about the islands without a definite aim, and leave the great rivers open to the foe.

Mr. Oman (vol. i. of *Hist. of Eng.*), speaking of Ethelred's early years, says of England: "She had a large fleet which under Edgar had been counted by the hundred ships, and could still assemble in great force." There is no evidence of any such fleet apart from this story, and it is contrary to everything we know of naval conditions at that time. The only naval force possible, apart from such few ships as the king could afford to build at his own personal expense, was a contemporary naval militia. Mr. Hodgkin alleges "some historic fact" at the bottom of this story. But he doubts the number of the ships. Divide by ten and the result is the same. The historic fact is the neglect by these eminent historians of the Irish and Scandinavian Annals, which would have shown them that the entire west coast of England and Scotland, and east coast of Ireland north of the latitude of the Dee was in the hands of the Northmen. If they were in alliance with Edgar his summer manœuvres were unnecessary, if not, they were impossible.

The author's apology for venturing to mention the names of these great writers in such a connection must be that this part of history, which is quite an important chapter, has, through this neglect of authorities, become such a muddle that all historians, hopeless of making any sense of it, skip over it as quickly as possible, generally stopping just long enough to throw mud at Ethelred II.

II. THE MEDIÆVAL MAPS

The monks not only wrote history but they attempted pictorial drawings of the earth's surface. Yet we owe to them nothing whatever in the matter of geography. There is probably no part of historical study which shows so painfully the intense depths of degradation to which humanity fell after the destruction of the Roman Empire as does the art of map making.

The map-maker at all times painfully plods in the footsteps of the traveller, registering as they are found for him new increases of human knowledge. But, in the first instance, most of these mediæval maps were apparently drawn not with any view of increasing the store of facts or correcting misjudgments in the past, but rather of pointing the moral of Biblical history or enlivening dull hours by illustrating fanciful romances. The world, as it was depicted in the maps of the eighth, tenth, or even thirteenth centuries, was the world as known to Strabo, but it was the world of Strabo confined and confused by a desire to illustrate Scripture, and by the acceptance as facts of the stories of heathen mythology and the fanciful myths of mediæval story-tellers. All the geographical knowledge of the pagan world had passed utterly away.

It is obvious that when the new world was unknown and the old world confined to the part north of the equator, it was impossible for the geographer to obtain a correct view of the world's surface. His actual knowledge by reliable hearsay was confined to Europe as far north as the Baltic, the south-western part of Asia, Egypt, and the northern coast of Africa. Of Northern Asia he knew nothing, of Eastern Asia nothing but what he could glean from travellers' tales: south of Egypt was an unknown land filled with freaks of fancy, gems and spices, serpents and venomous beasts, with, in some maps, the one realistic touch of the negroes as the Skiapodes, the shade footed people who protected themselves from the sun by one huge foot or by an equally huge lip. This may have been a

bit of humour on the part of some early map-maker, as the same mixture of heathen mythology, biblical story and mediæval myth, the Phœnix, Noah's Ark, Scylla and Charybdis, the seven sleepers, the Skiapodes, Gog and Magog, the Cynocephales, and so forth have been copied from one map to another through the centuries.

In all these early maps the East is at the top where we should put the North, there being no poles known to the map-maker. Our first parents in Paradise or being driven out of Paradise are generally shown there. The centre of the map, especially in the later maps under the influence of the Crusades, is frequently Jerusalem, as in the Hereford Map.[1]

The maps are either circular, as in the Hereford Map, or a flattened oval, the sea, in which the islands are stuck, encircling the world. The British Islands will be found in the bottom left-hand corner, above them, on the edge of the map, being Scandinavia.

The first map illustrated (p. 142) is one called the London Spanish Arabic Beatus.[2] Its execution dates from 1109. But it is one of ten known copies, made at different times between the tenth and thirteenth centuries, of a map made about the year 776 by a Spanish monk named Beatus. Spain under the influence of the Jews and Saracens was in the forefront of western civilisation in this and the succeeding centuries.

This map was one of many illustrations to a book by Beatus on the Apocalypse,[3] its special object, as stated in the Latin commentary, being to illustrate the sowing of the Gospel seed over the world. The original map contained portraits of the Apostles placed in the districts assigned to

[1] Of this map one quarter only, Europe (by the mistake of the mediæval artist marked Africa), is here shown. This is reduced from the copy in the British Museum of the large wall map in Hereford Cathedral.

[2] This map is inserted by permission from vol. ii. of Beazley's *Dawn of Modern Geography* (Clarendon Press), to which the reader is referred for most full and valuable information about these mediæval maps.

[3] "Merely one ornament of a splendid picture-book in which every Apocalyptic incident and monstrosity was duly figured."—Beazley, *Dawn of Modern Geography*, vol. ii. p. 557.

them by tradition. The narrow outlook of the artist is shown by the absence of any towns north of Spain except Narbonne and Marseilles (Mellisia), and any land south of Egypt and the Red Sea except the desert "ab ardore incognita nobis." The British Islands are expressed by four oblong blocks in the encircling sea marked respectively Scocia (Ireland), Britania (Great Britain), Tantutos (Thanet), and Tile (Thule; probably the mainland of Shetland). Further south is shown Insula Fortunarum (Madeira or the Canary Islands), and Scaria Insula, which Conrad Miller (*Mappæ Mundi*, 1895-8, Heft v.) decides, as I understand, to be Scandinavia. The long oblong adjoining India on the east would be Ceylon.

The second map illustrated (p. 250), the Anglo-Saxon Cottoniana map, was made, it is supposed, about 992-994, in the reign of Ethelred II. It is of a very different character from the Beatus map.

As a serious work it is far in advance of most other mediæval maps up to the end of the thirteenth century, and it differs from them in many respects. The author is supposed to have been a monk in the household of Archbishop Sigeric at Canterbury, the archbishop who first proposed the national payment of Danegelt in Ethelred's time, and from the prominence of Armagh in Ireland and the general excellence of the map for that time, he is supposed to have been an Irishman.[1]

The map may have, probably has, connection with the itinerary[2] of Archbishop Sigeric which he has left of his pilgrimage to Rome, but it also illustrates, like the Beatus map, a scriptural subject—in this case the districts assigned to the twelve tribes of Israel. Naphthali, Tarsus in Cilicia, the town of Archbishop Theodore as well as of St. Paul, and Mount Olympus adjoin one another in the map.

[1] "In the British Isles of the pre-Norman period there is no school of learning, art, or science comparable to that which sprang from the Irish Church of Patrick, Columba, and Aidan."—Beazley, *Dawn of Modern Geography*, vol. ii. p. 562.

[2] Archbishop Sigeric's Itinerary will be found tabulated in Miller's *Mappæ Mundi*, Heft iii. p. 157.

But although he essays to define the boundaries of the twelve tribes, he makes no effort to show those of Wessex, Mercia, or North Humbria. In England he shows London, Winchester, and Kent (this last somewhat in the position of Dorset), and in Ireland, Armagh. Irish Scocia, however, has become Hibernia, and Scotland is denoted by Camri. The Orkneys appear as a number of small islands, the mainland of Shetland as Tylen (Thule), and Man is shown. The island to the south-west may be the Scillys, or more likely Thanet. As he inserts Sleswig in Denmark, and a river to the east of it, which would stand for the Oder, he must have had some connection with Scandinavia, though he cannot have been an Irish Dane, as in that case Dublin would have taken the place of Armagh. In fact, it may be questioned whether we do not see here the direct influence of the Scandinavian shipmen on the learning of the See of Canterbury, which had been for many years Danish either in fact or in sympathy. The map-maker appears to have been acquainted with the north and east of Europe, as he places here the Scrittofinns (in Iceland), the Huns, the Turks, the Sclaves, the Goths in Dacia, and the Bulgarians. The Dnieper is mentioned by its native name, Naper fluvius. A curious entry is Sud Bryttas—Brittany. The islands in the Ægean Sea are more suggestive of reality, and in Italy, Verona, Ravenna, Pavia, Luna, Lucca, Rome, and Salerno probably refer to the Archbishop's Itinerary.

His knowledge of Africa does not extend beyond the coast. He marks in Carthage and Tingis metropolis (Tangier?), but beyond this it is "bestiis et serpentibus plena," and "arenis immergitur."

The fanciful illustrations are few. Noah's ark is moved up north to Caspian Sea, and the lions are in the north-east corner. Jerusalem is not the centre of this map, and in the east, in the place of Paradise, is shown the island of Taprobane, or Ceylon.

The third map illustrated (p. 396), the original of which, a large circular wall map, still hangs in Hereford Cathedral, is probably, to a great extent, copied from one by Henry

of Mainz, which was inserted in a description of the world dedicated about 1110 to Matilda, the mother of Henry II. With a prophetic eye the map-maker draws the British Isles out of all proportion to the rest of Europe.

This map is in date far outside the limits of this volume, being executed by a Canon of Hereford about 1300, but it belongs by execution to this earlier period and is of interest as showing the change in foreign relations which had come over the islands since the accession of Henry II. In Norway the monkey is shown, possibly denoting the commercial connection with the East. But the interests of the islands were evidently at this date far greater in France and Spain than in the north.

The north is, in some respects, in this map almost as elementary as in the Beatus maps. The North Sea has been entirely squeezed out. The Faroes, Iceland, and the Shetlands (ultima tile) lie in line west of Norway, and the Orkneys are represented by a large circular island surrounded by a number of small ones, a description more applicable to the Shetlands.

The race by Fair Isle, Sumburgh Roost, between the Orkneys and the Shetlands, is shown by the Svilla (Scylla), north of Scocia, which has here become the name for Scotland, and another Svilla, opposite Oleron Isle, may be intended for the channel between the Scilly Islands and Land's End. The Isle of Wight (Hecla) and (?) Ushant (Vinencium) appear on the map. Holy Island on the coast of North Humbria is unnamed.

The towns in the British Islands were at this time assuming political prominence. Those shown on this map are: (from the north) Aberdeen, civitas S. John (Perth), Edinburgh (on the west coast; it lies to the west of Hereford), S. Andrews, Roxburgh, and Berwick, Newcastle, Carlisle, Durham, Chester, Kirkham (a monastery of no importance), Beverley, York, Nottingham, Lincoln, Ely, Northampton, Colchester, Rochester, Canterbury, Dover, Winchester (Caen), Oxford, London, Exeter, Glastonbury, Bath, Gloucester, Hereford, Worcester, and Shrewsbury.

In Wales: Carnarvon, Conway, and St. Davids. In Ireland: Armagh, Bangor, Dublin, and Kildare. The rivers given are the Shannon, the Bann or Boyne, which is made to cut Ireland in half, the Tamar, Ex, Ene, Stour, Medway, Thames, Colne, Ene, Witham, Trent, Humber, Don, Ure, Tyne, Tweed, Dee, Severn, Wye, and Avon.

Among the district names are: Cornubia (Cornwall), Ulster, Lindseya (Lincolnshire), Northumbria, Thanet. The only mountains shown are Snowdon, the Clee Hills near Hereford, and the Grampians under their local name of Muneth.

The particulars of the south of Europe are more full in proportion to the barrenness of the north. Both towns and rivers are plentiful in Spain, Portugal and Italy, countries with which Britain had close political and commercial relations at this time, and the Isle of Oléron and the numerous places pictured in the south of France testify to the connection with Aquitaine. The monstrosities and fabulous details are in the east and north. All the maps of this time were pictures of the nations who lived on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, drawn by men whose interests were solely in Rome and the East. The Mediterranean Sea is the centre of the life of the world to all men until the capture of Constantinople in 1453 drove the Europeans of the South to seek with the help of the compass a world beyond, as the Northmen had sought it five hundred years before without that aid.

One ought not to be too critical of the wild romance which furnished illustrations for this work of art, the Biblical stories, the heathen mythologies, the mediæval legends, which appear in this map more freely than in many others much earlier. The men of that day had suddenly been brought face to face with the greatest of all miracles, the illumination of the Biblical story, the epitome of the heathen mythology, the source of the mediæval legend; they had themselves seen those very acres over which walked the blessed feet of the God who was man; every day new wonders were brought to them from the rediscovered East. No miracle, no phantasm, no creation

of abnormal life seemed impossible to the men of that day.

All these maps undoubtedly owe something to more ancient sources, besides the material copied from their immediate predecessors. The Roman Itineraries may have been used, and it is suggested that, among others, a lost map of Orosius, the friend of the great S. Augustine and Jerome, a Spaniard, who lived in the beginning of the fifth century and wrote the book on Universal History which was translated for Alfred, has been used. But no one of them seems to have attempted to recall Ptolemy's knowledge of the islands themselves.

III. THE OUTLINE MAPS

The outline maps are designed to be a complete index to places mentioned in the book, and to point the connection between the different places which affect the story.

As artificial boundaries generally follow the divisions made by nature, no inland boundaries are shown in the maps of the islands except where rivers and steep hills, which alone checked cattle-raids from without, show a natural border line. Thus, no artificial line is shown between North Humbria and Cumbria, as none ever existed. The idea has been in these maps to point the reader to the natural divisions which suggested the artificial ones. Rivers are in early days the most usual border line. The entire eastern coast of the larger island is divided up by rivers, each county and even each division of a county being marked by a river.

The political divisions of territory in the islands were as follows: The Romans are supposed to have held all the country south of the walls, but not to have held, in the later years of their occupation, the territory between the walls in great force. We know that three of their chief centres of civilisation were London, York, and Caerleon-on-Usk.

After the settlements of the Angles and Saxons in England, the east coast between the Humber and the

Thames became East Anglia, the marshes of the Ouse and the Lea cutting it off from the central division of Mercia; the land north of the Humber, North Humbria, or Northumbria, divided into the two parts of Deira from the Humber to the Tees, and Bernicia from the Tees to the Forth, the land from the Tweed to the Forth eventually obtaining the name of Lothian.

South of the Thames was Wessex, which included a protectorate over Kent. But Wessex was to some extent cut off from Kent by the downs and forests of Sussex.

The west coast of England remained in possession of the Britons, as they were gradually driven into the three divisions of Cornwall West Wales Cernyw or Cornubia, Wales proper, and Cumbria or Strathclyde the district from the Dee to the Clyde, the name Strathclyde being applied more to the northern part of this. This was overrun by the Northmen from the ninth century onwards.

In Wales, for the purposes of general history, the divisions of North and South Wales suffice.

The northern part was called Gwynned; the central part away from the seaboard Powys.

The eastern boundary of Strathclyde would be the Clyde as far as Lanark, and then the hills of Peebles, Selkirk, and Roxburgh, and the moors south of them. The present counties of Wigton and Kirkcudbright in the extreme west, on the shores north of the Solway Firth, formed a district called Galloway, which, to a late date, was a separate dependency inhabited by Picts.

The central part of England, between Wales, East Anglia, and the Thames was called Mercia. By the treaty between Alfred and Guthrum this was divided into two parts, east and west of Watling Street. The eastern part touched the estuary of the Humber, and the western the Dee at Chester, which thus became a very important fortress, as its possession prevented an attack from Ireland or Man and checked invaders from the east joining forces through the Humber and the Dee with those on the west.

On the coasts of Argyllshire, north of the Firth of Clyde,

was Dalriada, a settlement of Scots from Ulster, and on the east coast, between the Forth and Dornoch Firth, was the Pictish kingdom of Scotland, which eventually absorbed the whole of the north of the island.

The islands on the west and the north of Scotland were, in the first instance, settled from Ireland, but, early in the ninth century, the Norwegians settled the Shetlands and Orkneys and settled or controlled the whole of the north as far as Loch Ness, and, by the beginning of the tenth century, all the western coast of modern Scotland, and England as far south as the Dee.

In Ireland the hill ranges, which to some extent decided the boundaries of peoples, were absent, the striking characteristic of the country being its divisions by long rivers connected by lakes.

It was formerly divided into five parts—Ulster, Connaught, Munster, Leinster, and Meath, Meath then consisting of the present county of Meath, West Meath, and parts of the adjoining counties.

When under Henry II of England the whole came under the power of one overlord, it made no difference in the subdivisions, which once made use of, have with slight modifications been carried down to our own day.

The maps outside of Britain illustrate the story in the same manner, the reader being invited in these also to look to the natural rather than to artificial boundaries.

THE FIRST TWELVE CENTURIES OF BRITISH STORY

CHAPTER I

THE ROMAN INVASIONS

I. The First Battle of the British Navy

Britain was known by repute to the ancient world long before it took any part in history. It was one of the very few places in which tin, the only metal then known which would mix as a satisfactory alloy for producing bronze, could be found.

From Cadiz, a very ancient trading mart, the Phœnicians, the deep-sea sailors of antiquity, for long held a monopoly of this trade by sea. Later, the Greeks of Marseilles learnt its value, and entered into trade with the islands by land, carrying the tin across Gaul from the mouth of the Loire.

We have occasional notices of Britain from time to time from travellers and scientific men: about 350 B.C. from one Pytheas, a geographer of Marseilles and contemporary of Aristotle, and about 100 B.C. from Posidonius of Rhodes. From these writers we learn about Britain only the usual social or agricultural generalities, which impress themselves as novel or peculiar upon the trader or occasional explorer.

Britain does not come into history until the year 56 B.C., when Julius Cæsar, in the course of his campaigns in Gaul, had occasion to subdue the Veneti, a naval tribe who dwelt in the neighbourhood of the modern town of Vannes, on the southern coasts of what is now called Brittany.

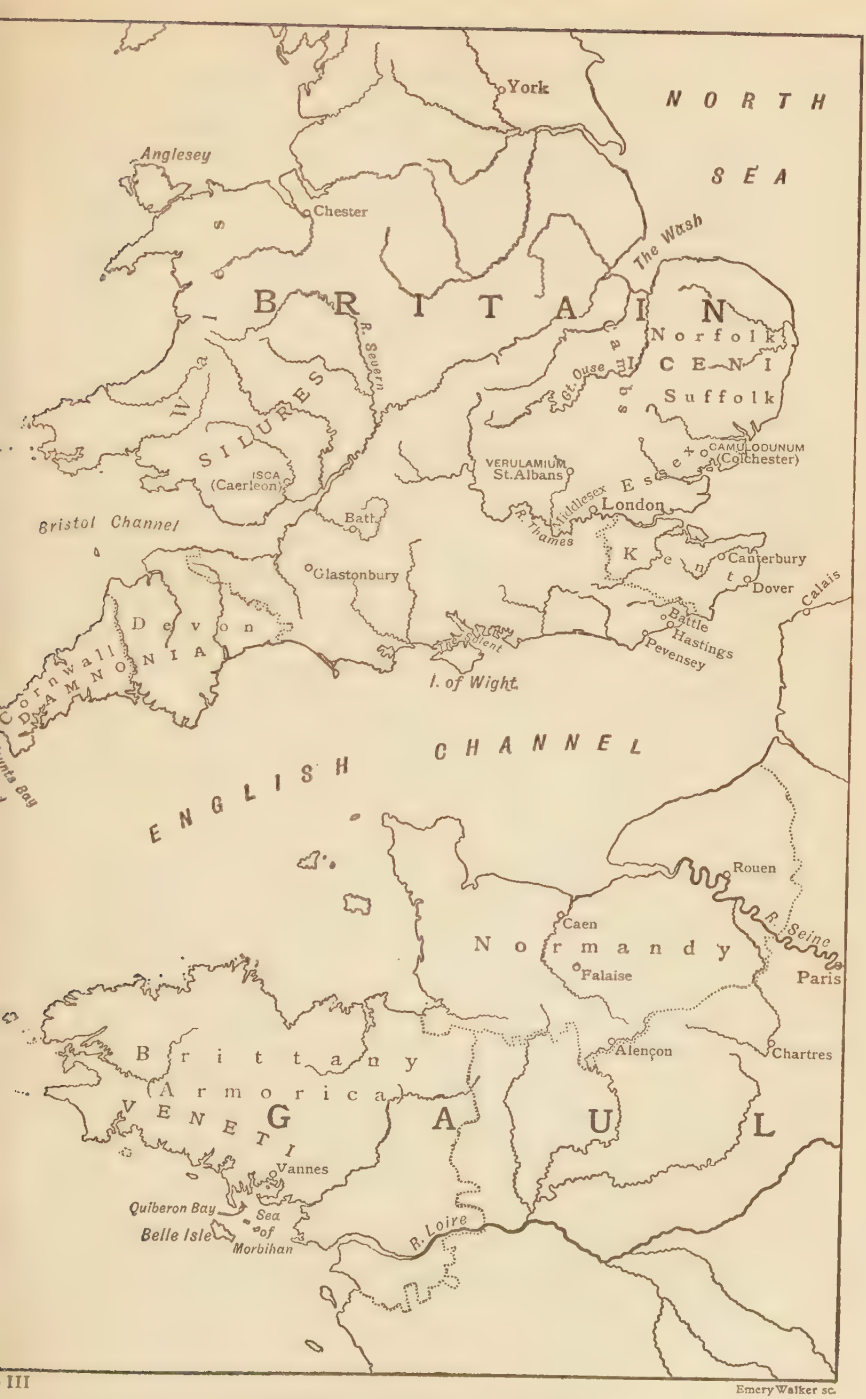
Cæsar met their navy in a great sea fight off the coast, in the bay of Quiberon and in the sea of Morbihan, a most dangerous and difficult sea for sailing ships, crowded with islands and sandbanks, full of strong currents and shallows, where some eighteen hundred years later, in one of the most dramatic sea fights in history, the British under Lord Hawke

Map II Emery Walker sc.

THE BRITISH ISLANDS IN RELATION TO THE CONTINENT AFTER PTOLEMY

destroyed and dispersed the French navy, most of the ships being run aground.

In this fight the Veneti (who were concerned as carriers of tin from the West of England to the mouth of the Loire) were supported by British ships from Damnonia, a district which corresponds to Cornwall and Devon, the same part of England which sent out as sailors in the sixteenth century Hawkins, Drake, Raleigh, and Grenville.



III

Emery Walker sc.

THE COASTS OF GAUL AND BRITAIN

It was most appropriate that the islands which were to give to history a great naval people should make their first appearance in this sea fight between Cæsar and the Veneti. For it was a very memorable battle. In the first place, it was the first naval battle in European history which was fought outside the Mediterranean lake, and it was practically the only battle ever fought by the Romans upon the open sea.

It was memorable for another reason. The Veneti and their British allies would appear to have antedated by many centuries the use of sailing vessels for war.

The object of all ancient sea warfare was to come to close quarters with the enemy at once, and either to settle the issue by hand-to-hand conflict or to sink the enemy's ship by ramming. Ships which depended on sailing were considered useless for war, as they were not able to sail close up to the wind like modern ships. They were not only liable to long delays from contrary winds while creeping along the coast, but were often unable to close with their enemies when they met them, or to obtain the weather-gauge. Hence sailing ships were only used as transports or for commerce.

The war-ship of Cæsar's time and for a thousand years after, the type of ship used by him in this action, was a galley rowed by long oars or sweeps, by rowers who sat on tiers of benches one above the other. But in this action the Veneti and the Britons fought under full sail.

Possibly these ships were owned by a group of Phœnician or Greek traders, who hired the men to man them, much as the trawling vessels of the North Sea are owned by the men who supply capital for the venture. We may be sure that the only sailors who were bold enough to face the boisterous waters of the bay and the Atlantic Ocean did not depend on oared galleys, but carried their merchandise in roomy cargo vessels propelled by sails. If so, they would have been able to teach the British mariner the art of using them.

At any rate, this first appearance of the British sailor connects him closely with the greatest commercial and naval nation of antiquity.

Cæsar, in the true spirit of the great man who acknowledges the genius of the enemy, even when it leads to his own discomfiture, gives an appreciative account of these sailors and their ships, noting their courage and good seamanship, as they manœuvred under sail on this very dangerous coast.

From Cæsar's description their ships were like the ships used in the sperm whale fishery, heavy and roomy, built with no regard to speed, but quick to obey the helm, and ready to take any sea. He describes them as having flat keels to enable them to manœuvre along the shoals and at all tides, such high prows that the Romans, exposed to a plunging fire from their decks as they sailed by, could not return it with effect, anchors fastened with iron chains instead of ropes (a use which was not revived until near the nineteenth century), and sails of hides sewn with leather.

They were built entirely of heavy oak, the beams of oak a foot thick, fastened with iron nails of the thickness of a thumb—a fact the more remarkable, as the vessels of the Britons of the south-east coast appear to have been flimsy coracles, fitted only for creeping along the coast or crossing the narrowest part of the channel.

Unable to board or to ram, or to injure them with darts or stones, as the Veneti sailed on or tacked when the Romans rowed for them, Cæsar's galleys could make no impression on these ships, while they suffered heavily from their fire. Finally, by arming his men with bill hooks on long poles, such as the farm labourer still uses for cutting high hedges, Cæsar succeeded in cutting some of the halyards as the ships sailed by, bringing their heavy sails down on deck, and throwing their crews into confusion. Deprived of their motive power, these ships were then boarded by Cæsar's marines.

What might only have been a partial victory was made complete by the accident of the winds. For as the Veneti and Britons abandoned the sailless ships to make their escape in those as yet untouched, a great calm brought the sailing vessels to a stand, enabling Cæsar's galleys to take and destroy the entire navy.

The strangest part of the story is the absolute disappearance from history from this time of these Damnonian Britons and their navy, until armed merchant ships of the West form part of the naval defence of mediæval England. We hear no further word of these big sailing ships, with their leather sails and their iron anchor chains. But in the days when Rome faded, when bold navigators other than the Phœnicians bore down from the north on Britain for conquest, the invasion stops in the Solent, as if (is it possible?) the tin carriers of Cornwall and Brittany still held the seas to the west. We know that communication with the Continent was not wholly cut off, and that in the latter part of the fifth century a British army of 12,000 men sailed up the Loire to the assistance of the Emperor Anthemius.

Ships of commerce were always armed. May we not believe that, in those dark days, the Britons of the West stubbornly opposed the Saxon enemy by sea? There is no evidence that bears on such a subject; we must form our own conclusions. But it is neither unlikely nor contrary to the traditions of history.

In the next year Cæsar prepared his expedition into Britain. He gives as a reason for his invasion, that in nearly all the Gallic wars the Britons had given assistance to the Gauls.

There were probably other reasons besides this; his desire to impress the people of Rome by this expedition to a part beyond the limits of the known world, and the value of the slaves taken in war. The price of slaves had greatly increased in Rome since the time of Marius. Cicero quite alters his tone of praise about this expedition, when he finds that only a few slaves, and those untaught in the arts of Roman luxury, would be the result of conquest.

It would have been most natural that Cæsar should have followed up his great naval victory by crossing from the scene of it directly to the coast opposite, at that time, no doubt, one of the most civilised parts of the island, as it was the chief centre of trade. But of this trade he appears to have known nothing.

Before embarking he tried to find out some particulars about the country from merchants who traded with Britain, but he met with no success. Merchants in all ages do not tell their trade secrets. Though they must have been very well able to give him information, he could learn, he tells us, neither the size of the island, nor what nations inhabited it, what were their customs in war, or their habits in peace, nor what were the best ports for a number of large ships. This last question the traders must have been well able to answer, so that it is significant that Cæsar moved his expedition the whole length of the dangerous coast of Brittany and Normandy up to Boulogne, and landed where there were no ports for large ships, and as far from the seat of the tin trade as the length of the island could make it.

Knowledge of his intentions being brought by the merchants to the Britons, they made haste to send him embassies, with promise to give hostages, and to acknowledge the Roman authority.

But Cæsar had no intention of being baulked of his conquest by any offers of submission. He sailed from Boulogne with two legions and some cavalry, met with no opposition at sea, and landed, after a brisk skirmish with the British horsemen and chariots, on the east coast of Kent. He then treated with the tribes near him, who promised submission and began to send in hostages.

But here the natural agency which has so often protected the British Isles interfered. A storm came up which wrecked Cæsar's ships, and the Britons at once adopted a more confident tone, and made fresh attacks on his camp. The autumn was approaching; Cæsar was glad to take the opportunity of fresh overtures for peace from the islanders to put his troops on board such ships as he had been able to repair, and to get back to Gaul, after six weeks' stay in the island.

In the next year he prepared a larger expedition to offset the questionable success of the first. He disembarked without opposition, and defeated the Britons in a battle. Checked for a time by another wreck of his fleet by a storm,

he finally crossed the Thames above London, received the submission of the south-eastern tribes, imposed a yearly tribute upon them, and returned to Gaul, taking his booty with him in the form of prisoners.

From this date until 43 A.D. Britain was left to itself.

Whether or no the tribute imposed by Cæsar was paid, trade and the tribal connections between the clans of Gaul and South-Eastern Britain kept the islands in touch with the Roman world, the more so as the settlement of Gaul brought closer the organised power of Rome.

There are many references to Britain in the classical writers of the day. The Roman dandies, we are told, drove their chariots, and the Roman ladies dyed their hair red, in imitation of the British warriors; and now and again tribal disputes brought British affairs into the circle of Roman politics.

The Roman politician, like a British type of to-day, was fond of interfering in and managing the affairs of uncivilised peoples of whom he knew nothing. He may have imagined Britain, as some British have imagined India, as inhabited by a homogeneous people of one race, religion, and habit, who were to be civilised by adopting the luxuries and the religious and political theories of Roman society.

The relations with the Empire would seem to have been friendly. When, in the reign of Tiberius, Germanicus attempted the invasion of Germany by sea, and his fleet was utterly wrecked in a storm, the Romans who were driven into Britain were kindly received, and safely sent back by the petty kings of the country.

At last the appeal of a deposed chief to Rome gave Claudius an opportunity to invade England, just as the appeal of a deposed chief led to the invasion of Ireland, 1100 years later, by Henry II.

Claudius came in person in 44, and in a few weeks received the submission of the south-eastern tribes. Guerilla wars with the unconquered tribes followed—wars which taxed the Roman resources to the utmost, first with the Iceni in the fens of Cambridgeshire, Essex, and Middlesex, and then

with the Silures in the middle West, whose leader, Caradoc or Caractacus, was taken and exhibited in triumph at Rome. In the end the Romans reduced to obedience the south-eastern part of the island, and to quiescence the western and northern part.

From this time, for nearly 400 years, the Romans were masters of Britain.

II. The Roman Occupation and Fourth Invasion

Under Nero the actions of the Roman officials of the island led to a historical rebellion. The King of the Iceni, either in hope of escaping the heavy taxation which the expense of Roman government rendered necessary, or for some other reason, made in his will the Roman Emperor co-heir with his daughters. But at his chief's death his whole property was seized by the Roman procurators, his widow, Boadicea, scourged, and his daughters abused. Such is the account of Tacitus, as it was told to him. As the will was a peculiarly Roman institution, and would be drawn by a Roman notary, one may be permitted to doubt whether the provision giving his property, involving chieftainship, to the Emperor was not introduced by a Roman official without the knowledge of the chief. Such things have frequently happened in the course of government by Europeans of less civilised races.[1] A chief could not give away the property of the tribe.

The tribes of the East and Midlands rose in general rebellion, choosing their time when Suetonius, the military governor, was absent in Anglesey, engaged in exterminating the Druid worship, which had been declared illegal. Suetonius hastened south with all speed.

In his absence a Roman colony of veterans at Camelodunum (Colchester), who by their ill-usage of the natives had invited the revolt, were utterly wiped out. The ninth legion, which went to their assistance, was destroyed on the march, the Iceni and their allies sacked Verulamium (St.

[1] As, for instance, when Clive made duplicate treaties with Omichund.

Albans) and London, and made a general massacre, not taking any prisoners, or, as Tacitus put it, "transacting anything pertaining to the commerce of war."

Boadicea assembled an immense army of the Britons, to whom Suetonius could only oppose a small force. But in the end, in spite of the disparity of numbers, the discipline and organisation of regular troops prevailed, and Suetonius, when he thought himself strong enough to risk a battle, completely routed the Britons. Boadicea ended her life by poison rather than fall captive into the hands of the Romans.

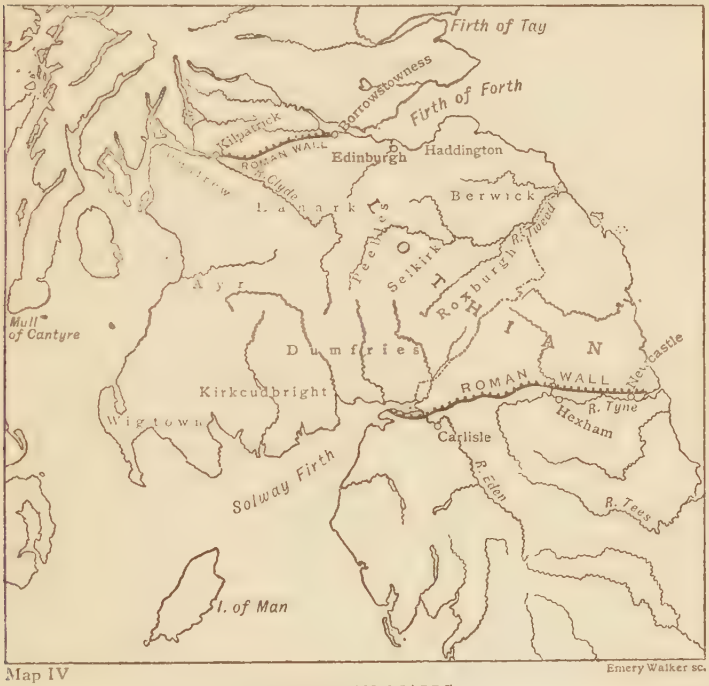
In the description by Tacitus of the great queen in her chariot, passing in front of her troops before the battle, exhorting them to the fight, and telling them that it was usual for Britons to war under the conduct of women, we are reminded of a scene fifteen hundred years later, when another great British queen, the Tudor Elizabeth, reviewed the troops at Tilbury in face of the deadly peril of the Armada.

The honesty and good sense of the successor of Suetonius, Agricola, reconciled to Rome those Britons who had fought against Suetonius and brought their struggle for independence to an end. They learnt to use the Roman language and the Roman dress; they submitted to exchange their tribal customs for Roman law; they no doubt developed at the same time a taste for Roman luxuries. It may be taken for granted that from this date the Britons, at least those in the south-east, giving up their own language, began under the Roman influence to speak and write Latin like the rest of the world. This would be a source of weakness when, after the departure of the Romans, in order to defend themselves against the Scandinavian invader they combined with the Western tribes who had remained in a state of semi-independence.

A few years later Agricola set out to subdue the Caledonians or Picts in the north of Britain. The country was so poor that the Roman Empire did not think it worth a permanent occupation; but to check their invasion

southwards, Agricola built a turf wall from Borrowstounness on the Forth to Kilpatrick on the Clyde, which was afterwards strengthened by the Emperor Antoninus Pius.

About the year 120, the Emperor Hadrian, after a campaign against these same people, built another wall, this time of stone, between the Tyne and the Solway, which,



Map IV Emery Walker sc.

THE ROMAN WALLS

by its great strength and size, is a remarkable testimony from the great empire to the persistence and bravery of the tribes it was intended to overawe. In 201, the Emperor Severus, after sweeping back the barbarians to the very north, strengthened Hadrian's wall as the final limit of the empire. This wall runs from sea to sea, with forts at short intervals. Large portions of it can still be seen.

These walls, of course, like Offa's Dyke in Wales, were not intended to keep out the tribes beyond, but only to

prevent their raids by interposing an obstacle over which they could not drive cattle, which would amount to the same thing.

Lothian, the part between the walls, often referred to in our history as being too poor to support an invading army, has been transformed by the energy and expenditure of the landlords and tenants in the eighteenth century into some of the richest and best-farmed lands in the islands.

It was unfortunate that Agricola was not able to carry out his meditated conquest of Ireland. The contrast between the England and Ireland of to-day shows how important has been the survival of the influence of the Romans. Ireland has had the Saxon conquest without the inestimable benefits of the Roman rule which preceded it. If the Roman roads and Roman law had penetrated into that country, and had shaken the tribal basis of society, many griefs which have been her lot might have been avoided. The island appears to have been well known to the Romans. Agricola (*Tacitus*, cxxiv.) reports that it and its inhabitants were very similar to Britain, and that "its ports are well known to merchants," an assertion borne out by the coins found along the coast. Ptolemy gives an account of the island which would suggest close acquaintance.

After the departure of Agricola, except for the incursions of the people beyond the wall, and the ravages by sea of the north-western coast by the Scots from Ulster in Ireland, there is little of interest to record until the time of Diocletian, when the Franks and Saxons, naval pirates like the Scots, appear in the English Channel. As Cæsar had formerly only been able to invade Britain successfully after destroying the fleets of the Britons and Veneti, so danger from these seamen came with the decay of Roman naval supremacy.

At the end of the third century we find a Count of the "Saxon Shore," meaning the north-west coast of France and the south-east coast of Britain, appointed with headquarters at Boulogne to check these northern seamen.

Great empires, which rule over half-civilised peoples not

allied to them by race or religion, do not always find it convenient to spend their own blood in their defence. The Romans, while they trained the peoples within the empire to fight away from their own country, thus discouraging a general armament for defence at home, checked invasion from outside the empire by making use on its borders of the troublesome energy of the untamed tribes, as frontier garrisons to hold back those beyond, much as we use the border tribes of northern India against the Afghans.

They adopted this practice at sea as well as on land. So Carausius, the Count of the Saxon Shore, instead of fighting the Franks and Saxons, took them into his pay, just as Vortigern is said to have employed the Jutes two hundred years later, as Dunstan employed Maccus, king of Man in Edgar's reign, or as Ethelred II employed Olaf Trygvasson, Thurkill, and St. Olaf of Norway. It is a very convenient system, so long as the mercenary does not turn his arms against his employer.

By this means Carausius became an independent Emperor of Britain, and remained so for some years until his murder by one Allectus.

Then Constantius Chlorus, the Cæsar of the West, who was the father of Constantine the Great, prepared to invade Britain for the fourth time. By a quick movement he tied up one fleet of Allectus in Boulogne harbour, by throwing a boom across the mouth of the harbour; then evading another fleet through a fog in the Channel, he landed two expeditions, one in the east and one in the west of Britain. He defeated and killed Allectus with the one force, while the other, marching on London, destroyed the army of Franks.

From this time until its final destruction the Roman power grew steadily weaker, and its forces were gradually withdrawn altogether from Britain.

Towards the end of the fourth century hordes of barbarians began to pour in from the north and east upon the exhausted empire, forced on by the pressure of other savages behind them. In 400 the Goths under Alaric plundered

Northern Italy, with the result that the Roman legion was withdrawn from Hadrian's wall. The combined Picts and Scots had overrun all Britain some thirty years before this, and though they had been driven back by the legions, they had become increasingly troublesome. The withdrawal from the wall left them free to make inroads into Southern Britain and into the settlements south of the walls.

In 407 the Roman army in Britain revolted and set up a usurper, Constantine a private soldier, who led the British legions into Gaul, fought with the various barbarian tribes there, and in common with them held parts of Gaul and Spain for some years.

In 408 Alaric and his Goths again invaded Italy, and in 410, after having been twice bought off with large sums of money, they took and sacked Rome, plundering all property and carrying off some of the inhabitants as slaves.

When the city of Rome fell, the Britons must have ceased to look to the empire for support.

With the departure of the Roman legions the condition of the Romanised Briton, who had put off his wild courage for Roman comfort, must have appeared very desperate as against his old enemies, the Pict beyond the wall, the Scot with his galleys on the north-west coast, and the raiding Saxon slave-trader on the south-east. The law forbidding civilians to carry arms was not likely to have been enforced in the outlying provinces, and the Romans probably armed the Britons on their departure, and may have left officers to drill and lead them. But apart from this the position of the Briton was desperate.

He must not only have arms, drill sergeants and leaders, but must reorganise all the official machinery, provide judges and officials of all sorts, garrison the different military positions, recruit an efficient army to defend the walls and to protect the coasts, and find money to pay for all.

And yet, if this were all, the Britons would only have been in the same position as the continental provinces.

But it was not all. The continental provinces, when over-run, had the Roman Government behind them, and

Italy, even with its crippled resources, able to buy them help. The Romanised Briton, as the network of savages tightened around him, had not only to remake everything, but he had to provide for the command of the sea.

From the time when Carausius took into his pay the Saxons and Franks, and with their help reigned in Britain, both Franks and Saxons served in the Roman navies and protected the coasts from their own countrymen. With their ships protecting the Channel, it is almost certain that there were settlements of Saxons already on the Saxon shore.

With the fall of Rome these northern seamen were free to attack the outlying possessions on their own account. Britain afforded a far more attractive point of attack than Gaul to a naval people; it was a country of great agricultural wealth; it could not be reinforced except by sea; and it had been forsaken by the empire.

The fifth invasion was to be from Scandinavia.

III. Britain under the Romans

The author wishes here to impress upon his readers a warning, which is applicable to every book of history, to receive with extreme caution all *general* statements, even of the most careful writers, especially in times before the means for swift travel and the spread of information through the press and letters enabled a man to check with some sort of accuracy stories of events of which he was not an eye-witness. If this is not kept in mind, the local narrative of the chronicler, though it may be perfectly true, of what passed under his own eyes, may be applied, as he speaks generally, to whole countries of which he knew nothing, and to peoples who were not in his thoughts when writing.

Cæsar is an unimpeachable witness. He was an observant man of business, attentive to detail, not allowing prejudice to disturb accuracy, and he had a just sense of proportion which urged him to describe only what is worth describing. But Cæsar often speaks of particular things in general terms.

"All Britons," he says, "dye themselves"—meaning those he saw, for he never went beyond the south-east of the island.

This becomes one of the most fatal causes of error in later historians, when the generalisations of men of good credit, such as Cæsar or Bede, made often on the authority of others having no credit at all (as when Bede quotes Gildas for characters and events of centuries before his time), are accepted without thought or inquiry as facts generally applicable. Accepted by one generation, they become authority of themselves as time goes on, and, as Fuller says, often "cast dirt on the faces of many innocent persons, which, dried on by continuance of time, can never after be washed off."

Even when the chronicler, as for instance the author of the Saxon Chronicle, was presumably careful, this argument from the particular to the general is, to say the least, misleading. The fearful account, so often quoted by historians, given under 1137 A.D., of the cruelties exercised by the owners of castles in the time of Stephen, cannot have been under the writer's own observation, as he exempts his own monastery from these evils, so that we have no knowledge how far the statement was generally applicable to the world outside. And the account ends with a characteristic contrast: "Whatever men tilled yet the earth bore no corn, for the land was entirely destroyed with such doings." In the next paragraph the chronicler tells us that the abbot in these nineteen years "provided for the monks and the guests whatever they required and held much indulgence in the house."

There is still greater danger when we come to check numbers which in history are never intended to be approximate, but merely picturesque expressions of quantity. When Tacitus tells us that the Britons under Boadicea slew seventy thousand Romans, and that the Romans in return slew eighty thousand Britons, the figures mean nothing beyond a great number. Estimates of armies and assemblies at all times are matters of guesswork, the numbers, even if correct,

giving no idea of the quality of the warrior, or even distinguishing the warrior from the camp follower.

Bearing in mind that Cæsar, Pliny, Strabo, and other writers spoke only from a very partial knowledge of the islands, their accounts of Britain become interesting and instructive.

The Britons could weave and spin, and wore clothes woven in colours, tartans such as the Scots wear yet, which, as they painted their faces, must have given them a very striking appearance; and they wore trousers, a strange habit in days when instant readiness for action required freedom of limb.

We do not know what sort of houses they lived in, but Cæsar tells us that of men there was *infinita multitudo* (a dense population), and that the houses were very thick together. Under the four hundred years of the pax Romana the population must have increased enormously, and must have been dense at the time of the Saxon invasion.

According to Cæsar, the agricultural part was confined mainly to the Kentish coast, but in this he is not speaking from his own observation, and other writers do not corroborate him. Agriculture in some parts of the island must have been in a very advanced state, as both Pythias and Pliny tell us that the farmers used wheeled ploughs, and that they grew fruit and vegetables. Pliny tells us how they manured the land with chalk, digging it out of pits of a great depth, the dene holes of antiquarian Kent. This would be cheaper in a country without metalled roads than hauling from a distance, and possibly chalk so dug out would be of more value as manure than chalk picked up on the surface. The farmer would then use the excavation as a storehouse for corn.

The speed and directness of Cæsar's military movements suggest practicable roads in the south-east of the island at least before his time, besides main highways from the south-east towards Anglesey. The use of wheeled vehicles would presume roads. But the art of road-making all the world has learnt from the Romans. The system of roads, with

which their engineers connected their camps and cities, supplies us at the present day with many of our best main highways, and the bridges which they built have lasted as examples until late in mediæval times.

Nor were the Romans in Britain inattentive to agriculture. The draining of fens and clearing of forests brought large tracts of land under cultivation. Then, as now, it was noticeable how fit Britain was for growing wheat, and it soon became one of the great corn marts of the West, sending immense shipments to Gaul in time of scarcity.[1]

The introduction of sheep was probably due to the Romans.

The Britons had a great number of cattle of a very small size, due no doubt to the withholding of the milk from the calves, and the difficulty of providing winter food. The large weight of modern cattle is the result of the cultivation of roots.

There was, however, a large breed of wild cattle on the island, the progenitors of our Longhorns, and there were quantities of game of all sorts in the many forests. Among the exports from the island figure the British hunting dogs and hounds.

The hunters did not use the bow and arrow, which only came into use in the country after the Norman conquest. Their weapons, whether for war or the chase, were assegais or darts, short spears and swords. In war they carried painted shields of wood with an iron boss, and used helmets and armour of leather and bronze.

They used their wooden chariots in war, as the modern motor car may be used in the future wars, not to fight from, but to bring the fighter into action so that he can dismount to fight on foot or reconnoitre, and to carry him out when he retreats. Their ease of movement, masterly driving and fearlessness commanded Cæsar's warm admiration. They drove ponies of the same class as the Exmoor, Welsh, or Galloway ponies of the present day, the same class of pony

[1] Providing, A.D. 358, one hundred and twenty thousand quarters of wheat (estimated) for the relief of Julian in Gaul.

that made such trouble for Edward III and his heavy-armed troops in his first campaign against the Scots, the same class that was used by the Boers in the South African war.

For money, iron rings of a fixed weight or brass was employed.

The change from barter to the use of coin is one of those things which attends a commercial development when the variety in value and bulk of things to be exchanged make barter inconvenient. Barter is never quite absent even in the highest development of trade, and its use is resumed as soon as the elaboration of commerce no longer requires coin. The contraction of trade explains the fact that the last Roman coins found in the island date from 428 or thereabouts.

The tin mines and lead mines continued to be worked, and iron is mentioned as found in small quantities. The refuse of Roman ironworks in the Forest of Dean in Monmouth has been found capable of producing marketable ore almost to the present day, and we must presume that the Romans worked the iron mines in the forests of Sussex which Cæsar mentions.

As a commercial people they organised the distribution of products, connected Britain closely with Gaul and Spain, developed mines, and encouraged arts and trades of all kinds. Upon barbarous usages they superimposed their commerce, their laws, and their religion. In the towns which they built, frequented by the traders and the Roman world of fashion, and in the great military posts, there arose temples of the Roman gods, and later churches, courts of justice, offices of the notary and lawyer, shops, banks of the money-lenders, and all the government machinery for the management of the province.

The money-lender always plays a great part in colonial life. At a great distance from the main springs of credit, but in close connection with them, he is enabled to charge a high interest, to make large profits, and often to enforce his bargain with a harshness of legal process which could not be endured in the neighbourhood of the springs themselves.

Neither Cicero nor Seneca ever appears to have troubled themselves about the means by which the large profits on their investments were obtained, just as many now who advocate strict supervision over the relations of capital and labour in Britain make no inquiry as to the housing, feeding, or rate of wages of those who in Japan or Bahia or Mexico provide them with dividends at a high rate of interest.

The trader too, who is engaged in selling the manufactured goods to the colonial and the native, and the colonial mine manager and local manufacturer, can employ his money to much better purpose than at home. He can borrow at the home rate of interest to lay out at a higher percentage in the colony.

So it is not at all necessary to suppose, when the Northmen came after the departure of the Romans, that they intentionally destroyed and rendered desolate the Roman cities. With the departure of the legions would go all the imperial finance, and all the system of credit which had occasioned the building of the towns. The Roman investor would be very unlikely to leave his money at interest in an unprotected country which had shown itself so willing to throw off the Roman yoke. Nor is there any reason to suppose that the Briton or the Roman colonial left behind would hesitate to ignore an indebtedness which could not be enforced. Trade would shrink to the actual value of the coin or commodities in stock, and when the accident of fire or the storming of a town in warfare destroyed the banks and other buildings, neither Briton nor Saxon would replace them.

The same thing would happen now in Johannesburg or Melbourne if British protection were withdrawn, or in London if Britain fell before eastern barbarians.

How far this Roman civilisation went, in what tribes it was solid reality and in what veneer, we cannot tell. We can only guess at the position and boundaries of the native party and of the Romanised party in later years. We know that three of the chief centres of Roman civilisation were London, York, and Caerleon on Usk, near Cardiff.

The Roman occupation brought to the part of the islands permanently occupied, the great blessing of the Roman system of jurisprudence, and the order and organisation which resulted from it. No doubt, in the dark days which followed their departure, the material parts of the Roman civilisation disappeared so completely as to make it seem that nothing remained. But habits of thought and influences of tradition, whether bad or good, never wholly die. Whether it were impressed upon the Saxon by the Briton who became his serf, or by the Briton who remained his foe, the habit of ordered thought must have survived, after the four centuries of the Roman peace, like the dormant and rotting seed, to reappear in Britain with the re-entry of the legal spirit of Rome, when the Papacy in the darkest moments of European history reconquered that part of the south-east of Britain which had submitted to Julius Cæsar.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST INVASIONS FROM SCANDINAVIA

After the departure of the Romans we have no contemporary historical accounts of the events in Britain for several centuries. All subsequent chroniclers and historians have taken in turn their material, such as it is, from, and founded their guesswork on, the writings of one Gildas, a British monk who fled when a young man from Wales to Armorica, the modern Brittany (or, as some think, to Glasgow), some time in the sixth century, and thence wrote (about 550–560) what Bede calls his *sermo flebilis*, a turgid invective against the wickedness of the British princes, of the British Church, and of everybody else in Britain in his time.[1]

As this *sermo flebilis* is the only source of information, it has acquired a spurious authority from its constant quotation by writers on this period.[2]

Nothing is known about Gildas or his character; we do not know why he fled to Armorica, or to Scotland or Ireland, whether from fear of the invader, or from vengeance of the enemy, or some other reason; his statements have no support from contemporary writings, or from their inherent probability; he had no personal knowledge of the times. In spite of his frequent quotation by authorities, theories of the Conquest founded on his denunciations must be considered as having little or no foundation in fact. The only course open is to fill in the very little that is available by guesswork,

[1] Nennius, if he ever existed, is dated variously from 620 to 994.

[2] For instance, Hume (a now antiquated writer) quotes on one page (vol. i. p. 31, edit. 1822) Gildas, Usher, Ant. Brit.; Gildas, Bede; Gildas, Gulm Malm;—each writer in turn adopting Gildas, and Hume quoting second or twenty-second hand from the author who quoted him, without any opportunity of checking the statements of the original writer.

with such details as seem probable, and to acknowledge that the filling in is guessing.

It had become a custom for the chiefs of the Scandinavian tribes in the Baltic to seek their fortunes on the sea in raiding expeditions for slaves and other booty, much as the Elizabethan pirate fitted out a ship to cruise in Spanish waters in the West.

Sailing in long galleys, rowed by fifty oars or more, their arms the axe and sword, they did not seek glory in fight, but, landing on the coast at some convenient place, they swept the country clean of the helpless inhabitants, the cattle and any other booty on which they could lay their hands, escaping to sea before the fighting force could be collected to oppose them.

The Britons had for long suffered from the naval raids of the Scots, a people probably of Scandinavian origin,[1] who were settled on the coast of Ulster in Ireland. In the fourth century, one of these Scots, Niall of the Nine Hostages, the ancestor of a long line of Irish Ardris, or over-kings, invaded the north of Wales in force, to be driven off by Stilicho, the great Roman general. Even under the protection of Rome the Britons had suffered greatly from these naval raiders. Patrick, among others, had been carried off by them from his home in Dumbarton to Ireland as a slave. In the absence of the Roman land forces and ships, the Britons were as helpless before these new Scandinavian raiders as these in their turn became before the heathen Northmen 400 years later, when they had settled in Britain and had become softened by Christianity.

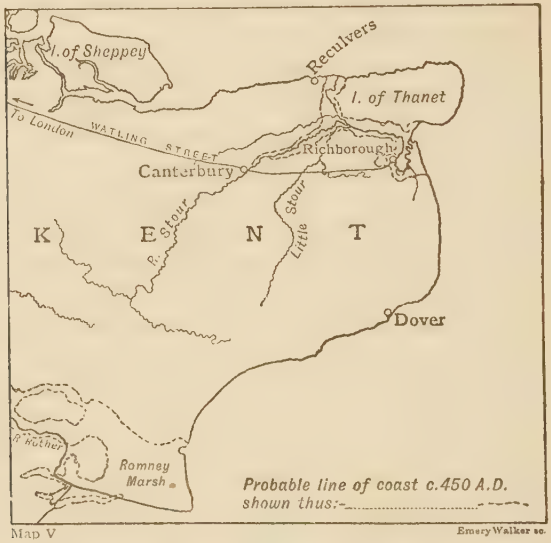
It was in each case a question of the command of the sea, and, as such, it is worth the attention of the British at the present day.

When the Romans left the island the Britons had need to organise some sea force to check these raids. In 449 one Vortigern, called by the chroniclers King of Kent, who was probably acting as Count of the Saxon Shore, took into his

[1] Amongst other fanciful derivations of the name, that from Σκυθοι, or Scythians, is one of the most probable.

pay three shiploads of Jutes, pirates from Denmark and the coasts of the North Sea and Baltic, under leaders named Hengist and Horsa, and settled them in the Isle of Thanet, on the east coast of Kent, which was then separated from the mainland by a channel much wider and deeper then than it is now, commanded by the two Roman fortresses of Richborough and Reculver.

This was quite in accordance with Roman precedent.



KENT, SHOWING THANET, SHEPPEY, AND CANTERBURY

The chief quarter from which invasion would be feared, next to the inroads of the Picts, was Gaul, which was in the hands of restless hosts of barbarians. The settlement of a naval force in Thanet was good policy. It controlled any invasion from Gaul, secured the south coast of Britain from Scandinavian attack, and formed a good base from which to repel such invasion on the east coast.

There was good reason to suppose that finding themselves headed off from Southern Britain, the Saxons would wear themselves out in inroads upon the kingdoms of the Continent.

It is quite likely that Vortigern intended to make himself Emperor of Britain with the assistance of these men, as Carausius had done nearly 200 years before him.

Disputes between Jutes and Britons would appear soon to have arisen, and the Jutes over-ran Kent. Later Vortigern and his Jutes were defeated by Aurelius Ambrosianus, who probably represented the Roman governor of Britain.

Thirty years later a band of Saxons, also pirates from the seacoast of Denmark, settled on the coast of Sussex, and, after another twenty years, more Saxons settled in Hampshire. Fifty years later one Ida settled at Bamborough in Northumberland, and some time in the sixth century Saxons settled in Essex.

The east coast north of Essex was gradually settled by a nation called the Angles, from whom part of the larger island has obtained its name of England. These Angles appear to have emigrated *en masse* from Denmark and the Baltic coast.

I am very much inclined to believe that these settlements on the coast, especially those of the Angles on the swampy lands of the east, were either invited by the Britons, or were at first looked upon by them with approval, as protecting them from Scandinavian inroads, and leaving them free to devote their whole force to checking the Picts (in which Ida would help them), and the Irish Scots, who in 490 settled in the Mull of Cantyre and Argyllshire. This is probably the foundation for Gildas' story, that Vortigern called in the Jutes in Thanet to assist against the Picts beyond the walls.

It is doubtful if the Britons at first realised the force of the stream which was sweeping away all humane life in Europe in that "long agony of the world." They looked upon the check to the Roman power as temporary only, and took what they considered to be temporary measures for defence. But the occupation of the coast free from Roman interference soon brought an ever fresh stream of emigrants from the Baltic, not as raiders but as settlers.

With the exception of a few questionable dates, the

Map VI

Emery Walker sc.

THE SETTLEMENTS OF THE SAXONS AND ANGLES

history of the islands from the departure of the Romans until Bede wrote[1] is a blank. Battles of uncertain date, fought in places which cannot be identified, productive of no results to social or political history, of no value for warning or example, and always subject to be falsified by the credulity of the chronicler, fill the pages of the story. All that we know as a certainty is that the Britons soon found themselves in conflict with the new comers, and that they were gradually overwhelmed; that, in the course of a hundred and fifty years, they were driven back from the eastern half of the island, throughout its whole length south of the northernmost wall, and in the next two hundred years into the mountains of Wales and the moors of Westmoreland and Cornwall.

Although at times no doubt definite campaigns were undertaken on both sides by the opposed tribes, such an advance would be effected mainly by the corroding process of border warfare, such as was afterwards chronic between England and Scotland over the capture of women and cattle and other trespasses. A strong central authority tended to check the advance by discouraging this. But border war was chronic under the conditions of the times, each tribe of the invaders carrying on perpetual feuds against some other, as well as against the Britons.

Attack is not likely to have been provoked by the Britons. The influence of the British Church, with its Roman traditions of federal authority, must for a long time have acted as a restraint in the interests of peace. But as the tradition grew weaker, and as the Romanised Briton speaking Latin was forced back on the territory occupied by the unsubdued or half-subdued tribes, the disputes over their mutual maintenance no doubt often led to internal war and weakened them against the invader.

When the Saxons began to settle, those on the east coast gave their name to Essex, those round London to Middlesex, those on the south coast to Sussex, while from

[1] Born at Jarrow in Northumberland 673.

the Angles came the name of East Anglia, the country of the Northfolk and Southfolk (Norfolk and Suffolk).

The settlement of the Saxons in Hampshire, which finally spread over all the land south of the Thames, and became the predominant kingdom, was originally called Wessex, the land of the West Saxons.

About the beginning of the seventh century these tribal divisions began to consolidate into the three kingdoms of Wessex in the south, Mercia representing the tribes of the Midlands, and North Humbria those north of the Humber, the tribes of the north-east as far as the Firth of Forth, the tribes of East Anglia and Kent being joined sometimes to one of these, sometimes to the other. When this consolidation of the Anglo-Saxon was beginning, the Britons were breaking up the more into tribal units, and were being cut off into the three separate parts comprised in the south-western counties of England, the Midlands and Wales, and Cumbria or Strathclyde, extending over the west coast from the Dee to the Clyde.

Out of the mists of this fitful warfare over the whole island from the first settlement in 449 to 815 when the Southern Britons were finally driven into Cornwall, a few battles of uncertain date and place[1] loom out as marking steps in the Conquest. These battles teach us little except the ebb and flow of the Scandinavian advance, and it is not worth while burdening the mind with either their possible names or dates—especially as the monkish chronicler was not a judge either of strategy or tactics, and was very likely to magnify as a great victory or a disastrous defeat a skirmish fought close to the time and place of his writing, while ignoring some other of far more importance.

But although we can frame no useful narrative from these "wars of kites and crows, flocking and fighting in the air," there are one or two questions which arise worth a few moments' consideration.

[1] Such as the battle of Mount Badon in 526, with which Arthur's name is connected, probably fought on the heights of Bannerdown near Batheaston in Somerset, commanding the valley of the Avon.

PUBL

Gildas and the writers who have followed him have made much of the internal dissensions of the Britons.

Now the unit of ancient society was the tribe. The rivalry of tribes, accompanied by a normal condition of war, underlies not only the history of the Britons and Saxons, but the whole mediæval history of Europe. It is the key to all early Scottish[1] and Irish history, and it is not extinct as an influence at the present day.

The barbarian recognised in the falling Roman Empire, which he raided and so frequently restored, the one and only power which did not rest on tribal authority, and which could therefore absorb and control the rivalries of the tribes. The repeated efforts to reproduce its authority, the short-lived empire of Charlemagne, Egbert's imitation in Britain, the acquiescence of the growing nations in the overlordship of the Bishop of Rome, the gradual consolidation of the island kingdoms into nations, the general adoption of the military feudal system, all owed their existence to the necessity felt for a central authority, when the empire fell, to counteract the distractions of society resting on the tribal basis. What historians call the "tyranny" of the earlier kings represents the relief felt at the strong hand that could keep the king's peace. When, as in Ireland, the subordination to central authority came late, and came in a hostile form from men only themselves recently controlled, it met with obstinate and lasting opposition.

Outside the Roman Empire at this time all social organisation was that of the tribe. Several tribes might join together under a common head for offence or defence, but such alliance was temporary and personal only to some exceptional leader. There was no tie of country or of race to bind together the host that followed Radagaisus

[1] When what is sometimes called the "national struggle for freedom" took place in Scotland against the English Edwards, the greater part of that country was under tribal government, the tribes looking upon the Scottish king and the English Edward as overlords, whose claims were of value so far as they had the power to enforce them. The tribal system in the Highlands of Scotland was hardly extinct in the nineteenth century. Our present party government is to a great extent tribal, the M.P.'s being chosen from the great families.

into Italy in 405, or the Angles, Jutes, and Saxons, who severally invaded Britain. If the common chief died, the tribes might follow another, or they might melt away into separate armies of invasion, each pursuing its own line of advance. A great victory which occasioned quarrels among themselves over the spoil, or a great defeat, might bring about the breaking up of the confederation. And the same effect was produced when the predatory armies reached good pasturage or fruitful soil.[1]

This position of common war leader, Bretwalda, Ardri, emperor, overlord, or suzerain—call him by what name you will—was, as far as we can judge, the position held successively by the kings of Kent, East Anglia, Mercia, North Humbria, and Wessex over the rest of the tribal communities up to the time of Athelstan, who was first able to draw them together in some kind of national subordination to himself. Even in that form the fusion often broke down.

When the Romans went, no doubt the Britons of the west coast, who did not feel the pressure of the invader, fell into tribal independence, subject only to such occasional federal authority. And when the conquest of the east coast threw back on the tribes behind families who wanted land and cattle for their subsistence, the necessity of defence forced the British tribes to place themselves under a supreme leader.

Amongst the leaders under whom they fought was one Arthur, whose name is embedded in legend from southern Scotland to Brittany. Again and again the poets have

[1] The wars of the Edwards and Henries in France, eight or nine hundred years later, are intelligible only if this is kept in mind. The success of the English or French king depended on his being able to keep in the field and to keep the peace between nationalities such as the Norman and Angevin, Burgundian, or Poitevin, who had nothing in common except an uncertain obedience to an overlord, and a rabid jealousy of each other. It did not pay them to allow the overlord to become too powerful, or to let any member of the victorious coalition gain too great an advantage. So the effect of a great victory such as Poitiers or Agincourt is nullified by unexpected inaction. Just in the same way now a great political majority may be nullified by the squabbles and jealousies of the coalition.

seized on his personality as a beam on which to weave a carpet of legendary epics, the threads of which form part of the fanciful creations of the time of the Crusades, along with Joseph of Arimathæa and the Holy Grail. The mediæval ecclesiastics and the writers of romances have introduced his knights and his country into their romances, while history has so little to tell of him that historians have sometimes contended against his very existence.

All that we can collect or surmise about him is that he was in all probability a Romanised Briton, in command of some tribe in the south-western part, at the beginning of the sixth century, and that he acted as supreme leader successfully against the West Saxons, combining the Britons to drive back their assaults in a number of battles.

Confederation is always difficult. Each tribe wished the defence to be concentrated on its borders to protect its own homes.

Another difficulty lay in the agricultural necessities which, in mediæval warfare, automatically dissolved armies at seed-time or harvest.

However terrible the prospect of the Saxon raid may have been to the Briton, there was a worse enemy ever present in all ancient society up to the time of the Tudors —famine. When seed-time came the soldier went home to sow, hoping that if the enemy came, he would come by the other valley and burn the other man's homestead. To this far more than mismanagement and quarrel are due the small results following in these times upon decisive victory or crushing defeat.

It would appear that there was some power in command of the sea in the West, which kept open communication with Armorica and the Loire. The Saxons do not appear to have taken their galleys west of Hampshire, nor the Scots south of Wales. When fifty years after the first sack of Rome the Goths over-ran that part of Gaul which was south of the Loire, twelve thousand British auxiliaries sailed under Riothamus, their king, to assist the Emperor Anthemius.

All these things considered, the difficulties of confederation for defence, the apparent command of the Western seas, the repeated checks to the Saxon advance, there is good reason to believe that the British were at one period of the struggle under the leadership of a great hero whose real fame has been obscured by the legends which have grown round about him. I am not concerned to dispute whether Arthur, the British hero, existed, though I see no reason to doubt his existence. But Arthur or no Arthur, there must have been some great soldier in command, whose influence and leadership in the years when the advance westward began, was felt from the Clyde to modern Brittany. A man trained under the Roman generals might well fill such a post.

Where all rests on tradition and legend one may choose one's own heroes. Even if he is mythical, Arthur is more wholesome as a character for historical speculation than the equally mythical leaders of the Scandinavian pagans. Looking to the value of history as a lesson for our own time, the only noble example to be viewed in these long years of exhaustion and struggle is that of Arthur holding the sea and defending Britain against the Scandinavian invader.

There is a theory induced by Gildas that the Saxons utterly extirpated the British population as they advanced. It is not in the least likely that they forewent the natural habit which induced their raids, namely the making of slaves, which until the substitution of money payments for ransom, was part of the recognised commerce of war and a good reason for its existence.[1]

The slave market of Europe, especially in the Baltic, was one of the most important markets until centuries after this time. As soon as they made permanent stay, the invaders certainly made use of captured Britons to do them service and till the ground while they fought. So that we can

[1] Berthgwyn, Bishop, early in seventh century. Liber Llandavensis, the Welsh record of Landaff—"Be it known that Rhiadda bought one uncia (about 108 acres) of the land Guruach from Gwyddogery and Cynfyn the sons of Clydri for 24 cows, a Saxon woman, a valuable sword, and a powerful horse.

safely take it for granted that except so far as the Britons abandoned their homes and fled, or died in the field, they became the serfs of the conqueror, according to the universal custom of war. The Saxon could not have held the country had he not provided that while he was fighting his slaves should do the farming, and feed the cattle.

The new invaders did not live in towns, but in detached villages, where they led the country life which we have inherited from them, so that, as they advanced, the town life which gave its character to the Roman civilisation ceased to be. But it is not possible that the British farmers fled in a body before the Saxon, when they expected a raid on their borders. The man in the towns could take his money and valuables in small compass with him, and fly on the first notice that the Saxon or Angle was coming his way. The towns would be deserted (waste camps) as the Saxons advanced, the centre of town civilisation gradually shifting westward. But the man whose wealth lay in crops and cattle could not so easily leave all behind. Living an isolated life as at the present day, he would be very slow to hear of what was passing a few miles from him. On news of the approach of the enemy, he might stay and help to fight them, or he might hope that they would pass him by. He would fall in battle or be enslaved. When the chronicler tells you (under 471 A.D.) that the Welsh fled from the Angles like fire, remember that he was not there himself, and that he wrote some 400 years afterwards.

To the labourer on the land, who was a slave under the Romans, the change from British to Saxon master mattered nothing, so long as he had bread to eat and skins to clothe him. The Roman provincial, and the Briton who copied him, was not likely to be in any way an easier master than the seaman from the Baltic.

One of the great difficulties of the British defence must have been the enslaved condition of the great body of the Romanised population. We know that the substitution of slavery for free labour was one chief cause of the fall of Rome. This condition would be intensified where the

Romans held the country, as they held Britain, by a despotic authority upheld by troops. When the Saxon invader advanced into the country, there must have been many among the Britons to whom a change of masters could bring no special evil.

I doubt if the condition of women was in any degree altered. Until in much later times the Church made its great struggle for the improvement of their condition, which constitutes one of its highest titles to respect, all women, whether free or slave, high or low born, were the drudges and playthings of man's superior strength. The wife who wove and the spinster who spun were no less slaves under British rule than as the valuable property of their Saxon masters.

Life must have gone on very much as usual. While the master was drinking, or hunting with the British dogs (very likely often in company with the British chief), or had gone on a foray, the wife and female slave toiled at the loom and wheel, baked, worked in the fields, nursed children, attended to the cattle—in fact, did all those things which women are doing at the present day in savage lands.

Apart from their bearing on religion and morals, when the chroniclers begin to supply us with facts and dates about the doings of the tribes of the Saxons, Jutes, Angles, Britons,[1] Picts and Scots, the story of their ever-changing combinations present no interest and teach no lesson, except as illustrating the instinct of the weaker to protect themselves by warring alliances against the stronger, just as we keep the balance of power in Europe now.

The kingdoms of Kent, North Humbria, Mercia and

[1] As a convenient convention I have called all the inhabitants of England and Wales who were in possession at the time of this first Scandinavian invasion Britons. I am well aware that there are supposed to have been a variety of races—big men with red hair, and short men with black curls, Goidels and Brythons, Celts and Iberians, and so on—and that the antiquary defines their boundaries. But the distinctions between these prehistoric peoples do not seem, like the necessary distinctions between the Norwegians and Danes in the ninth to twelfth centuries, to advance any historical truth or theory, and would rather check the interest of an ordinary reader.

Wessex became in turn the leaders of the English, the weaker states combining to check those which were too powerful.

The Britons from the Land's End to the Clyde form shifting confederations with heathen Pict or heathen Mercian against their stronger enemies. They were being gradually driven back to the west coast, the Saxons of Wessex pressing on them in the southern half, and the Angles of North Humbria crossing the moors into Cheshire and Lancashire to seize the level lands of the north-west.

After a great defeat by Oswald of North Humbria in 635, the Britons, or, as we may now call them, the Welsh of North Wales, became peaceably tributary to North Humbria.

Between 775–790, Offa, king of Mercia, the king who is said to have dug Offa's Dyke on the boundary of Wales to hinder their cattle raids, drove them back along his line, and defeated them decisively in 796 at Rhuddlan. In 926 Athelstan of Wessex expelled them from Exeter, and confined them in Cornwall beyond the Tamar.

After this time they cease to have a history as a nation, except that from time to time some more powerful prince in Wales obtained such supremacy as enabled him to direct the tribal levies in war.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIANITY IN BRITAIN

I. The British Church

The Britons, at the time of Cæsar's invasion, were in common with all the Gallic tribes directed in religious affairs by a priesthood called Druids. This powerful caste regulated all matters relating to education, administration of justice, and high affairs of State, even deciding as to the declaration of peace or war.

They exercised powers of outlawry and excommunication, settled intertribal disputes and questions relating to inheritance in land. In short the Druids were to the tribes of Gaul and Britain the federal authority which Rome claimed to be; and in consequence, soon after the Claudian invasion, the Romans overthrew them and prohibited their worship.

Our knowledge of what that worship was is very limited. But we know that they used Greek letters, and taught the immortality of the soul, though they did not teach the youth to write their mysteries but to commit them entirely to memory. So it is probable that some gleanings of Greek thought came to them through the Greek traders. Other of their customs which probably also came to them through the traders would seem to smack of the Baal-worship of the Phœnicians.

The prescribed worship lingered long in the remote parts of the island. A reminiscence of it may be found in the custom which survived until very lately of lighting bonfires on Midsummer Eve, and of passing through or jumping over the fire. To this day we deck our houses at Christmas with the sacred mistletoe of the Druids.

The Roman gods officially gave way to Christianity when Constantine set out to claim the empire. But there is good reason to believe that long before this, very soon after the Claudian invasion, Christianity had been introduced into Britain.

In this question, as with Arthur, we are dealing with tradition only. But the history of religion rests everywhere upon tradition—tradition of such living interest as to be often more trustworthy than history. So the reader must excuse the digression.

The novelty of the enterprise, the discovery and conquest of a land beyond the ocean, a task hitherto unattempted by the Romans, brought Britain into prominent notice as an object of special interest to the Roman world. There is reference of tradition to visits of several apostles not impossible or unlikely; the poet Martial celebrates the marriage of Claudia Rufina, a British lady, with Pudens, a high-born Roman, who may be the Claudia and Pudens mentioned by St. Paul in his Second Epistle to Timothy. But besides any conclusions which may be drawn from these and other references and coincidences, there is an early and persistent tradition that not long after the Crucifixion some disciples came to Britain, and lived as hermits at Glastonbury in Somerset, where they built a church of wattle.

There would be nothing in itself improbable in this story. It is rather in favour of the truth of the tradition that it should have been overlaid with legend and miracle, and connected with Joseph of Arimathæa and later saints. It would be very natural that those who had been so recently commanded to preach the Gospel to all nations should seek to carry it to the island which was then in the mouth of every Roman.

The land of the Damnonian Britons, remote from Roman authority and connected by the tin trade with the west coast of Gaul, would be a likely choice of territory, and the site of Glastonbury, standing then, as it occasionally stands now in a very wet winter, an island in a shallow sea, forms a most likely site for a secluded hermitage, consistent with

the usage of the early hermit missionaries. Iona, Tory Island, and Lindisfarne have somewhat similar positions.

This going forth of a leader and twelve disciples, in imitation of our Lord and His apostles, to very remote places was the usual form taken by early missionary effort.[1]

It is not necessary to believe that Glastonbury was the only place in Britain at which Christianity was preached at this early time. It is more likely that it was the only notable place that survived the destructive agencies of decay and fire. For as all early churches were of wattle or of wood, it would be surprising if any of them had survived the invasion.[2]

The western part of Roman Britain survived the onslaught of the heathen Saxon for so long after the eastern half was subdued, that when the Saxons took possession of Somerset they were Christians. Hence it may very well be that, while all traces of Roman Christianity had been wiped out in Kent, the Church of Western Britain lived on a continuous life until it was conquered and spared by the Christian Saxon.[3]

The tradition of such early Christianity in Britain may not be history, but the probability of its truth is very great. There is good reason why it should always have found cold support among writers of Church history, for the ancient British Church represents early antagonism to Roman authority, and there would be a natural reluctance on the part of the Church historian to give prominence to anything which might tell in favour of the prior claims of a British Church in the West over the Roman rival of Canterbury. The Charter[4] of Edgar, which declares Glastonbury to be the first Christian church built in Britain, probably marks the time when the Roman authority thought itself so securely seated that it could afford to acknowledge the antiquity of the more ancient Church of Britain.

[1] "For thirteen is a covent as I guess" ("The Sumpnour's Tale," Chaucer).

[2] Most of our cathedrals have been burnt down at least twice.

[3] Exeter, we know, was divided between the two races, the churches in one half of the city being dedicated to British saints.

[4] Forged?

Besides this the difficulty of tracing a proper succession from the apostles in the case of Glastonbury would tell against men's willingness to accept the story of its origin, and may be a reason for the monastic introduction of Joseph of Arimathæa as its founder.

It is an instance of the influence which hard fact has over mental theory, that men, desiring to set up a central authority which should replace the lost Roman Empire, and seeing the elements of such an authority in the Bishop of Rome, accepted willingly the improbable stories which brought St. Peter from Babylon to Rome, made him Bishop, and gave him supreme authority over the Christian world, while instinctively avoiding a schism they ignored the equally probable claims of Glastonbury to an Apostolic origin. At the Council of Constance in 1414–18, where the influence was strongly Anti-Papal, the British bishops were given precedence, as the representatives of the oldest Church in Western Christendom.

Undoubtedly in the second century Christianity was widespread in Britain.[1] Jerome, Chrysostom, and Athanasius all refer to Britain as Christian, British bishops attended Church Councils at Arles, Sardica, and Ariminum in 314, 347, and 360, and the British Church busied itself in sending missionaries to convert the heathen.

Towards the end of the fourth century, while Britain was still under Roman occupation, Ninian, a Briton of good birth, living on the shores of the Solway in North-Western Britain, went to Rome (an easy and safe journey in those days), and, after long study, was consecrated bishop by the then pope, Damasus. The Church of Rome had not at that time advanced its claims to universal dominion, but was the object of high regard and veneration from earnest men of

[1] Bede, under date 156 (167 in Saxon Chron.), speaks of a King Lucius of Britain who made an application to Pope Eleutherius asking for baptism, which was granted. Mosheim says of this, "I agree with the best British writers in supposing him to be the restorer and second father of the English churches." But he thinks the application more likely to have been made to bishops in Gaul, on the ground that the rites of both churches were identical. It doesn't matter to whom the application was made.

Map VII

Emery Walker sc.

THE MISSIONARY AREA OF NORTH BRITAIN, WALES, AND IRELAND

all lands. Ninian visited St. Martin of Tours, and on his return built a church of stone[1] and a monastery or school attended by Irish students near Whithorn in Wigtonshire.

Then he commenced missionary work in this district. But his chief work was not done here, but among the Picts who inhabited the middle of Scotland south of the Grampians and north of Edinburgh. Generally speaking, Britain south of the walls had become Christian under the Roman occupation, and there would be many Christians and many Roman families in the debatable land between the walls. But there is no reason to suppose that any of the tribes north of the walls had embraced Christianity.

There was no tradition of apostolic missions in Ireland. But it is believed that the south of Ireland was very early visited by Christian missionaries and that there were bishops in Ossory, Waterford, Wexford, and Emly, the southern ports being even in those days trading centres of great importance. Britons may have fled to Ireland and Man from the Diocletian persecution in England in the fourth century.

In 431 a missionary bishop Palladius was sent by Pope Celestine to this part of Ireland, but his work was not wholly successful. He fell out with the local king, Nathi, and left the country as an almost unbroken field to a successor who is one of the great names of missionary history.

While Ninian was carrying on his work among the southern Picts, St. Patrick[2] was born at Dumbarton on the Clyde,[3] the grandson of a priest and the son of a deacon of the Church who was also decurion or town councillor. The Church did not then insist upon the celibacy of the clergy, a doctrine which became in after times so important, so that it was not a mark of disgrace but rather of honour to be the son of a priest. It was not uncommon for priests, especially for monks, to be celibates, but it was not a necessity to

[1] The very earliest stone records of Christianity in Britain are at Kirk Madrine in Wigtonshire, a stone column with a cross and monogram.

[2] It is now generally acknowledged that the "confession" of St. Patrick and his epistle to Coroticus are genuine works of his hand, and that we may rely on the particulars about his life contained in them.

[3] Patrick's birthplace has been claimed by Boulogne, Bristol, Caerleon, Carlisle, Dumbarton, Glastonbury, parts of Ireland, and Tours.

conform to any rule of celibacy. In the East even at this day it is the exception.

At sixteen years of age (it is said), Patrick with his two sisters were seized by the Ulster Scots in one of their raids on the coast, and he was carried off to Ireland as a slave, on a farm in Antrim, where for six years he remained. When he escaped, he went to Gaul, where he studied for orders with St. Martin at Tours and with St. Germanus at Auxerre.

When Palladius left Ireland, Patrick was ordained by a Gallican bishop, and went with a party to Ireland.

He arrived at Wicklow in 432, and went north to Down and Ulster, where he had been in captivity. But not meeting there with much success, and possibly seeing that the people would be best gained through the over-king, in the following year he went with his following to Tara in Meath, the residence then of the kings of Ireland.

Reaching Tara in the evening of Easter Eve, the party lighted a fire at their camp, unaware[1] that there was a heathen celebration at Easter, at which it was the rule that a sacred fire should be lighted before any other. The Druids, excited by the breach of this observance, prophesied evil to the king unless the fire lit by the strangers were at once extinguished. But the king, Leary (or Leoghaire), though at first alarmed and hostile, let his curiosity get the better of his fears, and ended by inviting Patrick and his party to the palace, where the Saint on Easter Day improved the occasion to good effect, preaching Christianity to the assembled high chiefs, and gaining important converts. Patrick followed up his success at once, preaching and baptizing at Tara, and then he went south, where he met with equal success, converting among others the king of Cashel.

Here he came in touch with the earlier missionaries of the south, who at first held aloof from him, as later the Welsh bishops did from Augustine. But after a time, whether by tact or good fortune, he gained their co-operation,

[1] It is hard to see how Patrick, who had been so long in Ireland, could be unaware of this custom.

and would appear to have had no further trouble. In later years he went north, and founded Armagh.

After this he held synods and councils of the Church and drew up rules for its guidance, devoting himself, when the seed was once more sown, to the organisation and discipline of the churches. He would appear to have divided his field into dioceses, like Theodore in England much later, as he forbids a bishop acting in the diocese of another.

But a custom arose of consecrating as bishop anyone very conspicuous for holiness or learning, without giving him a diocese. Besides this the monastery rather than the diocese was the unit of all early missionary enterprise, and monasteries in Patrick's time sprang up by hundreds. The bishop became subordinate to the abbot or abbess, who represented the religious organisation of the tribe.

Most of these monasteries were not like the later monasteries quiet homes for devotion of men and women who wished to live retired from the world, but colleges and schools where the youth could be educated in the learning of the time under religious influences and discipline by the priests and monks. Vows were not necessary, only obedience to the rules of the monastery while the pupil remained there. So great was the advance of Ireland, untouched by the Saxon invasion, that at the assembly of Drumketta in 574, a scheme of free general education was proposed, of a college for each province, with a number of secondary colleges under it. We do not know how far the scheme was carried out.

But there were convents for such men and women as desired to lead the saintly life in quiet, such as the convent of Kildare founded by a noble lady St. Bridget in 480 and the monastery of Inis Scattery on the Island of Scattery in the Shannon, to which no women were admitted, founded by Senanus.

Two great scholastic monasteries, in which the pupils were counted by thousands, later became pre-eminent—Bangor, in County Down, and Clonard, on the Boyne, which is the connecting link between the two islands.

It is generally aristocrats who lead in missionary enterprise, and it is a reason for their success. The common man sees the acknowledged leader willing to risk his life for his faith, to undergo hardships, to endure obloquy. It appeals to him, and he follows where he would not follow one of his own type.

After St. Patrick's death in 465, the Irish missionaries seemed to have turned to Wales for instruction. One Finian, a native of Leinster, passed his early years under St. David, and when he came back to Ireland brought with him Britons who helped him to found the monastery of Clonard, of which he was the first abbot. Afterwards in Clonard was educated St. Columba, an Irish chieftain of royal blood from Donegal, a great-grandson of Niall of the Nine Hostages, sometimes called Columb-cille, or Columba of the Churches, from the number of monasteries founded by him.

When about thirty years of age Columba was sent to be made a bishop, being then a deacon, to a bishop named Etchen, one of those consecrated for an especially blameless life, who was living in solitary seclusion without any diocesan duties. Etchen was ploughing when Columba came; he at once left the plough and began the ceremony of ordination. Whether inadvertently or on purpose he got hold of the wrong office, and ordained the young deacon a priest instead of making him a bishop. Columba, says the legend, looked upon this as a direct divine intervention, and refused afterwards to become a bishop, a refusal made use of in days long after by the supporters of the Presbyterian party.

Some ten or twelve years later, about 563 (just after Gildas had written his invectives), he undertook a mission to Scotland, sailing to the west coast like the founders of Glastonbury, with twelve companions, establishing his mission on an island called Hii or Iona, in the open sea, between the scene of St. Ninian's labours among the southern Picts and a kingdom called Dalriada or Scotia,

established at the end of the fifth century by Christian Scots[1] from Ireland, in Argyllshire and Cantyre.

This now barren little island,[2] set in a stormy sea, became the centre of a great missionary work in both islands, connecting the work in Ireland, with which Iona kept in close touch, with missions in the west of Scotland,[3] and through Holy Island with the east coast and midlands of England. Neither Iona nor any other of these western islands can have been the barren wastes which they now are when Columba and his mission settled there. Iona would support only a very small population now, but before the destruction of the timber it and all the western isles were probably well peopled and the seat of a high civilisation. That the Northmen later thought it worth their while to settle and hold these islands in force for so many centuries testifies to their productive character.[4]

Columba was followed by a distinguished series of workers, Adamnan who wrote his life, one of the most interesting of all the legendary lives of saints, Aidan the apostle of Northumbria, and Finan who preached to Mercia and East Saxony.

The withdrawal of the Romans from Britain had resulted in a great relapse into heathenism beyond and between the walls. Most of the work of Ninian and his successors was to be done again, the tribes being induced through their chieftains to return to the Christian faith. Work in this direction was being done in Cumbria or Strathclyde from Glasgow down to Cumberland (and

[1] Tighernach, under 502, says colonised by Fergus the Great.

[2] But see the Duke of Argyll's *Iona*.

[3] Columba is the first person mentioned in British history who showed any knowledge of modern seamanship. He had been up from Iona to Inverness, preaching Christianity at the court of the heathen Pictish king Brute. When he wished to sail down the chain of lochs which are now the Caledonian Canal, the wind was blowing up the loch, and the heathen priests claiming this as their doing defied him to go. Columba sailed close up to the wind, and to their amazement "the boat is borne along against the contrary winds with amazing velocity." Then the apostle tacks, and "the adverse winds veer round to the advantage of the voyage." As a consequence, the king and all his people accept Christianity.—Adamnan's *Life of Columba*.

[4] See the chapter on "Forests," *infra*.

possibly also among the Southern Picts), by St. Kentigern or Mungo,[1] who is represented as being a Pict of Southern Scotland. Consecrated by an Irish bishop, Mungo set up his monastery at Glasgow as bishop of Strathclyde. Driven from Strathclyde, he went to stay for a time with St. David at Menevia in Wales, and founded a monastery at Llanelwy on the banks of the Welsh Clyde. Called back to Strathclyde, Mungo handed over Llanelwy to his pupil, St. Asaph, after whose name it has been called.

After Mungo's return, he and Columba are said to have met at Glasgow.

Soon after Columba began his mission, the British Church was holding a synod (with St. David present) to check any appearance of the great Pelagian heresy, so-called after one Morgan or Pelagius, a Welsh monk of the fifth century. On its first appearance St. Germanus and St. Loup had been sent by the Pope to combat the error.

They succeeded in more than convincing the heretic by argument. St. Germanus, who had been an old soldier, headed an army of Britons and defeated the Picts and Saxons at a battle near Mold in Flintshire, called the Hallelujah battle, from the word which Germanus and his men shouted to frighten the foe as they advanced. It is hardly consistent with the account of the decay of the British Church either that she should have given birth to an arch-heretic (for such things do not happen to sleepy Churches), or that she should be able successfully to crush its revival a hundred years later.

When one speaks of any of these men, Ninian, Patrick, Columba, Mungo, Aidan, remember that they were only a few whose names have survived to us out of the many like men who were engaged in evangelising the heathen.

The British Church then, for in both islands and in every part of them it was ritually and doctrinally the same,

[1] "Cyndeyrn and munghu are pure Welsh—Cyndeyrn from cyn, chief; teyrn, lord. Mwyngu, from mwyn, amiable; cu, dear." Skene, *Celtic Scotland*. ii. 183. Theuog was the name of St. Mungo's mother, a name preserved in St. Enoch's Railway Station at Glasgow.

spread the Christian religion over all that part of Britain which was occupied by British or Roman-British peoples. Whether it attempted to convert the Saxon invader was another matter. These invaders were heathen, worshipping Woden, Thor, and Freya, the gods whose names are embedded in our days of the week, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. They were not bigots for religion, but they marked out the monks for special attack, as the Romans had spent their force against the Druids, recognising that the brute force owes always its success to the spiritual ideas which lie behind it.

It would be natural, judging by their work among the Picts and Scots, to suppose that the British did attempt the conversion of the Saxons. It could not have been an attractive task. In those days no force of ironclads and soldiers followed to avenge the death of the missionary to the heathen. They sought death if they could thereby spread the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

They did not, one would hope, shrink from the martyrdom which would be a very likely consequence of an attempt to avenge a material invasion by a spiritual one. But if they did make the attempt, and it may very well have been so, and that Britons were among the many glorious failures whose bones whiten in all lands in testimony of Christ, the time did not come for Christianity to conquer the Saxon until the end of the sixth century. And then in the first instance it came from another quarter.

II. Rome returns to Britain

Columba died at Iona in 597, and in this year or thereabouts[1] a mission was sent from Rome to Britain by the great Pope Gregory.

Ethelbert, king of Kent, who was at this time overlord of the other Saxon tribes, married Bertha, the daughter of Charibert, king of the Franks, who brought with her to Britain her chaplain. The Franks, who were Christians,

[1] I make no point of accuracy in any of these dates.

had become masters of Gaul. Possibly Charibert invited Gregory to send his mission.

The story of its origin is that Gregory before he was Pope, saw in the market-place at Rome some young boys exposed for sale who were Angles, from the land north of the Humber, then called Deira. Struck by their appearance, he planned a mission to their country, punning on their names, "Non Angli sed Angeli," "Deira they should be plucked from the wrath of God," "their king being Ella, Alleluia should be sung in the land," and so forth.

The great Pope was never to go on this mission himself, nor was the land of the Angles to take its Christianity from Rome. But in 597 he made an effort in that direction by sending to Ethelbert a band of missionaries under the leadership of one Augustine.[1]

So far as the kingdom of Kent was concerned, the adoption of the Christian religion was very soon effected. The religion of the tribal chief was the religion of his people, and his change was the signal for a general compliance.

In most cases the chief's acceptance of the new religion was not in the least governed by any consideration of its truth or spiritual advantages, but purely by considerations of policy. A ruler would hardly venture to change his religion even for temporal advantage unless he were certain of the support of his people, or unless, like Edwin of North Humbria later, he had consulted the Witan. As will be seen, the change of religion by a Bretwalda, or overlord, led to his being deprived of power, unless he could carry with him the subject tribes.

[1] Ten years or so before the trembling Augustine set out through Gaul, on his mission from Rome, to the Frankish wife of Ethelbert of Kent, Columbanus, a Leinsterman, headed a mission from Bangor in Ulster to the Christian Franks in Burgundy. What sort of people these Christians were Milman [*Latin Christianity*, lib. iii. c. ii., quoted in Stokes's *Celtic Church in Ireland*, p. 136] tells us: "It is difficult to conceive a more dark and odious state of society than that of France under her Merovingian kings, the descendants of Clovis, as described by Gregory of Tours. In the coalition of barbarism with Roman Christianity, barbarism has introduced into Christianity all its ferocity, with none of its generosity or magnanimity. Its energy shows itself in atrocity of cruelty, and even of sensuality. Throughout, assassinations, parricides, and fratricides intermingle with adulteries and rapes." He gives instances.

In this instance, at first all went well. Kent was close to, and in alliance with, the Christian Franks. The missionaries were kindly received, Ethelbert was baptized, and with him his people. After nearly two hundred years' absence, Rome came back to Britain.

Neither Gregory nor Augustine seem to have known of the existence of the British Church. It would have been natural, if they did know it, that they should wish at once to join with the Church of the West in the work of conversion.

About five years after his landing, Augustine appointed a meeting with the British bishops at some point in the West on the banks of the Severn, whither he went under a safeguard from Ethelbert through the territories of the different tribes.

The British bishops must have looked with great curiosity upon the Latin-speaking Christian strangers; though sent by their deadly enemy the Kentish king, they had yet come to them from Rome, that distant name of yet almost superstitious reverence, the Rome whose fortresses, roads, and bridges yet remained in Wales to mark the greatness that had passed away.

Augustine found the British Church differing in several small points in its usage from the Church of Rome, but he does not appear to have found any difference of doctrine, or any sign of that decay which is insisted on by Gildas. The two most important differences were the form of the tonsure and the time of keeping Easter.[1]

The British form of tonsure was across the head instead of being circular. The British Church had followed an older and less scientific computation of Easter, which had been discarded by the rest of Western Christendom since the Saxon invasion, and this and the tonsure stood in the way of cordial co-operation.

If Augustine had been a great man like the Pope who sent him, he could have waived these points with the certainty that when the British Church had once joined

[1] The question of Easter is elaborately stated in the 4th volume of the *Annals of Ulster*, Edition 1901.

with Rome, the correct Easter and the conventional tonsure would follow from the pressure of opinion of the great majority of the Church. But he does not seem to have been a man possessed of the qualities which make matters of difference vanish under tact and Christian sympathy.

Men who travel to spread their religion, with their lives at stake if they fail, are often strangely intolerant of fellow-Christians who differ in small matters of observance and belief. Augustine seems to have had a good deal of this missionary intolerance, shown by his threats and imprecations when he failed to bring the British bishops to his views.

But there was an issue at stake separating the two Churches far greater than Easter or the tonsure. This issue is defined in the answer which Bede, who gives us an account of the interview, puts into the mouths of the British bishops, that "they would do none of these things, *nor receive him as their archbishop.*" It was the claim of Augustine to be their spiritual overlord which broke off the negotiations. We are not in a position to judge the quarrel, for we hardly know how far it was in Augustine's power to waive this claim of paramount authority, or what would have been the political consequences of its acceptance by the British.

It was not until the seventeenth century that the idea of Nonconformity, the allowance of any variation from the religion of the State, became a political belief; up to that time the religion of the State was conterminous with its physical authority. The Civil Wars of the seventeenth century were waged over Europe primarily for the maintenance of this principle of unity of faith.

The adoption of Augustine as their archbishop would very likely have meant that the British, who were then at the height of their struggle with the invaders, and had just won a great victory, would, by acknowledging the spiritual authority of Ethelbert's emissary, acknowledge Ethelbert as their temporal overlord.[1] The Churches of England and Scotland, and the Roman power in Ireland, are evidences at

[1] A similar result follows the baptism of the Northmen in the tenth century.

the present day of this identity of the temporal and spiritual power in mediæval history.

As events proved, the adoption of Christianity was so very dangerous a move for Ethelbert, that he could not afford to lie under the suspicion of joining in alliance with the enemies of his subject States, except on the terms of their complete submission. An attempt on Ethelbert's part to order the conversion of East Anglia through its king, Redwald, led, a few years later, to the loss of his supremacy.

It is quite possible that he sent Augustine on this mission with a view to persuading the Britons to acknowledge his superiority, and so to put an end through the Church to a troublesome war. It is even possible that Augustine's mission was, in the first instance, invited, and the change to Christianity made with this end in view, and that the Franks became Ethelbert's allies on the basis that Kent would become Christian.

After this the British Church remained apart for centuries, the only part of Britain which, for the time, responded to the teaching of Augustine being Kent and Essex.

On the death of Ethelbert, Kent became for a time again heathen. Though the new king again changed religions, the power of Kent had fallen so low that Christianity did not spread beyond its borders.

On the death of the king of Essex, Essex again became heathen, and remained so. The Deira of Gregory's hopes remained unconverted.

The whole story of Augustine's mission, and of his meeting with the British bishops, is of the highest interest in British history. It is an epitome of the subsequent relations of Church and State, which make up great part of history up to the sixteenth century. Augustine is our first example of the ecclesiastic claiming for Rome the authority of the overlord of the State.

The attitude of Augustine towards the British bishops is that assumed later by Rome to all who would not unconditionally submit to her authority; in the relations which existed between Ethelbert and the tribes which he con-

trolled, the identity of the Church with the nation, which was eventually to break up the Roman supremacy, comes into view. It is easier by the light of this to understand Henry VIII's assault on the monasteries as the first step in the quarrel which put the national king in the place of the Italian Pope.

The crowded monasteries of the British Church, confederated in loose tribal fashion, owning no strong central authority which could enforce discipline or ensure pure doctrine, sending out their gospellers-errant to preach to all without distinction of territory or of race on the one hand, and the little well-drilled following of Augustine, with its undeviating discipline and its uncompromising aims on the other, are but examples of the two forces which divide always our world of religious thought. On the one hand, there is the preaching bishop or friar, be he Aidan, Latimer, Wesley, or their like, the architect who rouses the enthusiasm of the unthinking crowd to the conception of great truths; and, on the other, the builder who makes the continuance of the enthusiasm possible, expressing it in the intellectual ideas of the times, reducing to concrete form the abstract faiths on which it is founded, and binding society into a moral whole by discipline, by the enforcement of obedience to a common authority.

So long as there was no authority stronger than the tribal chieftain to set the example, the success of the British monk was immediate and widespread, and the other made little progress.[1] But when with Roman influence came the power to produce order and peace, which gave to Rome her commanding place, before the Popes put by their great mission to all Christendom, and descended to become themselves the turbulent chiefs of Italian territory, their authority swept all before it throughout the islands.

[1] In Bede's account of Aidan, he tells us that "he was wont to traverse everywhere, both town and country, on foot, never on horseback, unless compelled by some urgent necessity; and whenever in his way he saw any, either rich or poor, immediately turning to them, he invited them, if infidels, to embrace the mystery of the faith; or, if they were believers, to strengthen them in the faith, and to stir them up by words or actions to alms and to good works."

There are several instructive touches in the story. Wholesale conversion of the heathen in those days as in these was not always the result of spiritual emotion, nor failure of necessity a sign of want of earnestness or of decay. When Redwald, king of East Anglia, is ordered by his overlord to become Christian, he complies by adding an image of Christ as a god to the heathen deities in his temple.

Possibly some part of the immediate failure of the Roman mission may have been due to the arrogance shown by the cultured Roman to the half-civilised peoples to whom he went. Races may take their fashions or their mechanical inventions, but never their mental ideas, from those who teach them in a spirit of alien superiority.

Rome has, to a great extent, learnt this lesson, but there is room for others to learn it too in these days when the white man ostentatiously takes up his burden to the peoples of the East.

The miraculous until very late ages was a common fact of daily life.

When Augustine finds the British bishops unwilling to accept him, he proposes to refer the matter to miracle. A blind man, an Angle, is provided and offered to the bishops, who were unable to make him see. Augustine then by prayer restores his sight. They do not seem to have been at all surprised or at all impressed.

The whole story in all its details rests on the authority of the chronicler Bede, usually a singularly kindly and impartial writer. His animus is shown by the satisfaction with which he relates how, a few years after these events, Ethelfrith, the heathen king of North Humbria, when warring with the Britons, made a great slaughter of the monks of the Welsh Bangor (who, Bede tells us, to the number of many thousands "all lived by the labour of their hands") at a battle at Chester, where they were not combatants, but were praying for the success of the Britons. Thus, he says, "was fulfilled the prediction of Augustine that these perfidious men should feel the vengeance of temporal death also, because they had despised the offer

of eternal salvation." It is well to keep in mind that it was the monk who as chronicler also wrote the history of Dunstan, Edwy, and Ethelred, of William Rufus and Anselm, of Henry II and Becket, of John and Stephen Langton.

It is matter for regret that in the English Church calendar, even in the days of Bede, we find no mention of the names of those who differed from Rome on this point of ritual observance, of Patrick, Columba, or Aidan, as saintly workers, who were worthy to be remembered.

III. The First Schism

The next forty years saw the dying struggle for heathendom as a State religion in Southern Britain, by Penda, king of Mercia.

The office of war leader had shifted to the king of North Humbria, as that part was threatened by a combination of the Angles of Mercia and the Britons from North Wales and Lancashire. Edwin, the king of North Humbria, had married the daughter of the king of Kent. She came north, bringing her chaplain, Paulinus, with her. The same cycle of events took place as had taken place in Kent. Edwin consulted his Witan, including the heathen priests, and, they consenting, he ordered the change to Christianity in his dominions.

A few years afterwards he was attacked by Penda and by Cadwalla, a king of the Britons, and, deserted by some of his own subjects, he was overthrown in battle and killed. North Humbria reverted to heathenism, and Paulinus the chaplain fled back to Kent.

Cadwalla appears to have occupied York and held North Humbria for a year or more. Then he was defeated by Oswald, another North Humbrian king, who had been brought up under the monks of Iona. After a great victory over Cadwalla and the British in 635, which was virtually the turning-point of the defence, Oswald had the hardihood to persuade his people to embrace Christianity. He sent to Iona for a bishop. Aidan came and set up an eastern

monastery at Lindisfarne or Holy Island, off the coast of Northumberland, and there began a mission work which gradually spread over the north, east, and midlands as far as Essex.

But the heathen gods were not to be so easily driven out. The conversion of Oswald led to the usual result; he was defeated and killed by Penda. Only the southern part of North Humbria became heathen again, but Wessex, which had also become Christian on the preaching of a Gallic missionary, Birinus, sent by Pope Honorius, went back to heathendom.

Soon after this the son of Penda married the sister of Oswy[1] of Bernicia or Lower North Humbria, and became a Christian, and Mercia again took its faith from North Humbria. Then in 654 Penda made a final effort: a great battle took place, he was defeated and killed, and heathendom came to an end. The West Saxons again became Christians, and Chad from Holy Island preached among the Mercians and East Angles.

It would be a mistake to suppose that any part of these struggles had any origin in a desire to uphold religious faith. No doubt the Christian missionaries and the heathen priests alike encouraged their flocks by appeals to the deities to interfere. But in themselves all the wars between Briton, Saxon, and Angle were wars for land and cattle, for the means of life from the soil. "The gods from above their mad labour behold, and pity mankind." Religion only enters in as each tribe looks to the god or to the local saint to uphold the cause of valour, expecting victory in answer to gifts and sacrifice.

Want of success led to a change of gods, especially if a series of successes by the other side were supported by some natural accident which in the ignorance of natural phenomena was ascribed to miracle. The claim of the Papacy of first a ghostly, and afterwards an intellectual and physical, supremacy over mankind, was made far easier by this idea

[1] Oswy had married Eanfled, the daughter of the king of Kent.

of supernatural powers rewarding good and punishing evil by success in warfare.

The forces of the excommunicated king of the nation fighting under interdict fought under a very heavy handicap, though in aught else they might be superior. They went into battle with the belief that perhaps heaven was against them. The belief must always have been open to question by results. But judging by the rules of discipline in the monasteries,[1] the Psalter and the Old Testament, which would be in great part typical of their own conditions, formed a larger portion of the moral training of the Christian missionary than any other part of the Scriptures.

Soon after Augustine had had his meeting with the British bishops, the Pope tried to settle the question of Easter with the Irish clergy. In 629 a synod was held in the South of Ireland, at which it was sensibly decided to send messengers to Rome to note how Easter was observed by the crowds who congregated there from all parts of Europe. The result was so favourable to the Roman contention, that the Christians of the South of Ireland, under the bishop of Emly, adopted the Roman calendar. But the North kept the old reckoning.

The question became the more acute the more the Roman influence increased in the islands. There may have been an important social side in the provision of the food for the monasteries and retinues of chiefs.

In 664 Oswy, king of North Humbria, called a synod at Whitby to discuss the matter. He had married a Princess Eanfled of Kent, who brought a Roman chaplain with her; no doubt he found it awkward that his wife should be fasting while he was enjoying the merriment of Easter.

The question here was unusually difficult, as the monks from Iona and Holy Island were men of immense reputation for sanctity and learning, and they were very strongly against the change. But in the end Oswy found means to give a decision in favour of Roman usage.

[1] In Luxueil, for instance, a continental offshoot of Clonard, the numbers were so large that the recital of the Psalter is said to have been continuous day and night.

Aidan's successor with a great part of his following gave up their work in North Humbria and went to Iona, and afterwards to the island of Innisboffin, on the coast of Mayo, in Ireland, where they held out for another half century in their opinion. In Wales the dispute ended in 768 through the influence of Elvod, bishop of Gwynnedd.

In the same year Oswy joined with Egbert of Kent in appointing an English-speaking priest to be archbishop of Canterbury. Their nominee dying of fever at Rome, the Pope appointed Theodore of Tarsus, a very learned Greek, to the position, and, to make sure that as a Greek he did not introduce any heretical Greek Church doctrine, sent Hadrian, another learned monk, with him to Britain as assistant from Rome.

This Theodore, Bede tells us, was the first archbishop whom all the English clergy obeyed. He appears to have been a man of a character the very opposite to Augustine, very persuasive, tactful, and capable, with great energy for work, and sympathy with men's failings. Augustine and his successors had never learnt the language of the English, and had hardly gone outside the borders of Kent. Theodore spent three years in travel over the whole country, and then, in 673, called a council at Hertford, our first Parliament, at which dioceses were laid out, to which bishops were to confine themselves. Subject to the supremacy of the Primate at Canterbury, the bounds of each diocese were at first conterminous with the bounds of each State. But Theodore very soon subdivided several of them. He is even supposed to have outlined the English parish system.

In this year, 673, the Venerable Bede was born at Jarrow, in Northumberland. He never left it, but lived and wrote there until his death. It is to him as our first credible historian that we owe any facts worth knowing of what took place in or before his time. His style is charmingly simple and straightforward, and apart from the miraculous occurrences which he relates, and his bias against the schismatic Church of Britain, he appears to be strikingly trustworthy and impartial.

Meanwhile the British Church in both islands continued the system, invaluable for evangelising great masses of heathens over vast tracts of country, of travelling bishops connected with monastic establishments, the Church in Ireland especially being very vigorous in its missionary work at home and on the Continent.

These early British clergy were not only men of very pure life, but of great learning, according to the learning of the time.

Besides ploughing and preaching, they disputed with heretics, wrote poems, sermons, and treatises, and established great schools of learning in many places. Their schools and monasteries had their own severe rules, the order of St. Benedict not taking root in Ireland until brought in by the English in the twelfth century.[1]

The Northumbrian monks from Iona, who refused to conform to Roman usage, spread their work among the Picts, Britons of Cumbria, and Scots of Ireland. Cuthbert, who became the favourite saint of North Humbria, was among those who conformed to the Roman usage. He became abbot of Melrose, doing his work among the Angles of that district. He went afterwards to Lindisfarne, where he died.

The Christianity of Britain had thus been due to various agents. With the exception of Kent and Essex, which took their conversion from Augustine's mission, and the work of two Gallic missionaries, Birinus and Felix, it may be said that the two islands received Christianity from the branches of the British Church in Wales, Ireland, and Scotland.

We can never be too thankful for the union of the Church under the great organising power of Theodore, which brought Southern Britain once more into touch with

[1] Ireland and Irish education is responsible for one of the only "two really considerable men in the republic of letters from the sixth to the eleventh century" (Hallam's *Middle Ages*, vol. iii.), John Scotus Erigena, who taught at the Court of Charles the Bald in France. The early monasteries were frequently double, one for monks and one for nuns, living separately. Examples are Kildare (St. Bridget), Coldingham on the cliffs of Berwick (St. Aebba—St. Abb's Head), Whitby (St. Hilda), Barking (St. Ethelburga).

the civilisation of Southern Europe, and helped to put an end to the internecine tribal wars, which prohibited any social advance. It has been a great misfortune for Ireland that the unity and organisation did not extend to her. But, as Bishop Lightfoot said, "Not Augustine, but Aidan, is the true Apostle of England."

CHAPTER IV

A REVIEW. EUROPE AT THE OPENING OF THE NINTH CENTURY

As time goes on, the first immigration from Scandinavia ceases; the tendency throughout the islands, as in Scandinavia itself, is to consolidate into larger bodies, many tribes becoming subject to one powerful tribe either by conquest or by adoption, subject to check by a combination of the weaker against the stronger. There is more communication with Gaul, where the kingdom of the Franks, through which Christianity had come to Kent, was becoming a most powerful empire under a new dynasty which represented the ministers or mayors of the palace of the older Frankish kings.

In 802 Egbert ascended the throne of Wessex, the supremacy passing from Mercia to Wessex, and remaining with Wessex henceforth, so long as the Saxon line lasted.

Although his accession marks no special advance in our island history, the date is a convenient point of review for the European events which influenced Britain.

In 476 the Western empire of Rome came to an end. For the next sixty years the bishops of Rome acted as rulers of the city under the barbarian kings of Italy. In 537 Belisarius, the general of Justinian, the emperor of the East, invaded and conquered Italy and held the greater part of it for the Eastern empire.

About 570, the Lombards invaded Italy, and gave their name permanently to Lombardy.

At the time when Gregory sent Augustine to Britain, Rome had sunk to its lowest point. It was always in imminent danger of famine, as the supplies came from

HAMPS
PUB

outside of Italy; it was in imminent danger of being taken by the Lombards, whose fortresses were close to its gates; it had ceased to be the object of much interest to the Eastern emperors, whose energies were centred on the affairs of the East.

The city had ceased to be the seat of learning or of science, or the centre of trade. All that remained of the literature and learning of the ancient world was in the East; the channels of trade, by the inroads of the barbarians in the West, tended more and more to turn eastward, where the empire still afforded some encouragement and some protection to merchants; the vogue of pilgrimage which soon afterwards brought the great and rich barbarians from all parts to Rome had not yet set in; the city became yearly poorer and more sparsely populated.

The temporal powers of the Popes had their rise in the vigour with which in those direful days Gregory and his successors administered on their own account the government of the city of Rome, without waiting for the slow action of the Eastern emperor, to whom Rome was nominally subject.

Then two events happened which gave a still greater impetus to the papal authority.

A new empire sprang up in the East, which at one time threatened to overcome the whole Christian world.

In 622 the prophet Mohammed was driven from Mecca by his enemies. This flight was but the prelude to the conversion and conquest of the East by the doctrines of the prophet. His successors within a hundred years over-ran half the then known world. They took Jerusalem, drove the warlike Emperor Heraclius out of Syria, scattered the Roman navies, occupied Egypt, taking the great city of Alexandria, the commercial metropolis of the East, and conquering all the northern coast of Africa; and in 710 they crossed the straits into Spain, out of which they drove the Visigoths. Advancing into France, their onward course was stayed by a great victory which Charles Martel, the grandfather of Charlemagne, won over them at Tours in 732.

Map VIII

Emery Walker sc.

SOUTHERN EUROPE (Arabia and Persian Gulf inset)

Hitherto, in the rivalry which had always existed between East and West, the prestige of the Roman bishops had been challenged and overshadowed by the patriarchates of the East—Constantinople, Ephesus, Jerusalem, Alexandria—the cradle of Christianity. The destruction of the greater part of this Eastern Church brought Rome still further into prominence as the head of the Christendom that remained.

This prestige was greatly increased, when in 728 the Italians, headed by the Pope, revolted against the Eastern emperor. The immediate cause was the attempt to abolish image or picture worship by the emperor, Leo III. This action of the Eastern emperor resulted not only in weakening the Eastern empire by importing into imperial problems the fatal weakness of religious schism, the most fatal of all causes of weakness, but in cutting off permanently the Western Church and the Italian province. The revolt placed the Pope in the position of defender of the true faith against a schismatic rule, and protector of the liberties of Rome at once against the tyranny of the emperor and the Lombard barbarian.

A quarter of a century after this revolt the Lombards over-ran all Italy. The Pope appealed for help to Pepin, king of the Franks, who crossed the Alps with an army and delivered Rome. His son Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, completed the conquest and annexed Lombardy to his dominions.

Then followed a natural alliance between the Popes and their protectors. The Pope gave to Charlemagne the support of the spiritual power, and the emperor supported the papacy by arms. Finally the papacy in Italy separated absolutely from the Byzantine Empire, and threw in its lot with a new emperor of the West. On Christmas Day, in the year 800, Charlemagne was crowned emperor at St. Peter's, in Rome.

For a few years there was once more a Roman Empire of the West.

From this time the powers and influence of the bishops of Rome steadily grew, first in alliance with this Western

empire, and afterwards as assuming claims of universal authority superior to it. The conditions of Europe up to the fifteenth century were so favourable to this claim that the papacy became the final Court of Appeal in all disputes arising out of the universal condition of war.

As such an arbiter the Pope gradually became possessed of a double authority, the two halves of which reacted on one another. As bishop of Rome he represented the spiritual continuity of the successor of St. Peter. As temporal ruler of Rome he became, as Charlemagne's empire decayed, the revived representative of the ancient Western empire, representing to the warring world of tribes and kingdoms the overlordship by which old Rome in East and West alike had stifled local warfare and eradicated local creeds.

This appellate power of the Popes steadily increased over Western Europe. They could punish with spiritual censures those who defied them in matters of faith, and could call in the secular powers of kings as their underlings to enforce morality and equity. When a great ruler refused to obey the Church's order, the ban of excommunication laid him open to attacks of his own vassals or of neighbouring powers, who were only too glad of the opportunity to benefit at his expense. Very often the question what was morality or equity was determined by the papal interests. But, though the motives of the papacy might be transparently selfish, the advantage of having a Court of Appeal, which next time might be on his own side, generally acted to procure obedience to Rome. So long as the conditions of Europe needed a common overlord, both the Pope and the Western emperor exercised a conflicting authority. When the need ceased to be felt, the empire fell into decay, and both the temporal and spiritual power of the Pope received a check. In its time it served most valuable purposes, but, like all things human, it was subject to the defects and vices of its age.

Meanwhile, although the East continued to be the great centre of trade and manufacture, both in the Mediterranean

and across Russia in the Baltic, and, although too all letters and science which had survived the fall of Rome, as well as astronomy and physic which were cultivated by the Saracens, were centred in the East for many centuries to the future benefit of Europe; yet the Eastern empire with all its magnificence, and with all the strength of ancient tradition behind it, ceased to play any part in the affairs of Europe, except in holding back from the West the wave of Mohammedan invasion, and in working out the theological problems of Christianity, until its final destruction in 1453.

The new Western empire of Charlemagne included modern France, all northern Spain, the greater part of Italy, and all Germany west of the Elbe. His conquests in Germany over the still pagan Saxons had far-reaching effects felt by his own empire and by Britain. For by checking any inroads by land to the south, he precipitated a new naval wave of Scandinavian invasion, the raids on the rivers and seaports of the Norwegians and Danes.

One effect of the Mohammedan invasions in the Mediterranean had been to direct some part of the course of trade over Russia to the Baltic, and to throw it into the hands of these Scandinavians. Besides being daring seamen they were eminent traders, establishing their depots for merchandise in the chief ports of the coast visited, and frequenting the great fairs of Aix-la-Chapelle and Troyes[1] which Charlemagne established to stimulate trade. But it is as heathen pirates that they have come down to us in history.

[1] From which comes our pound Troy, the weight at Troyes of broken bullion.

CHAPTER V

THE NORTHMEN

THE chief feature of the history of Western Europe for 300 years (800–1100 *circa*) is the invasion and settlement of the seaboard of all countries in the north-west of Europe by the Scandinavian races from the North and Baltic Seas.

To form any just conception of this very important portion of our history, certain elementary facts must be kept steadily in view.

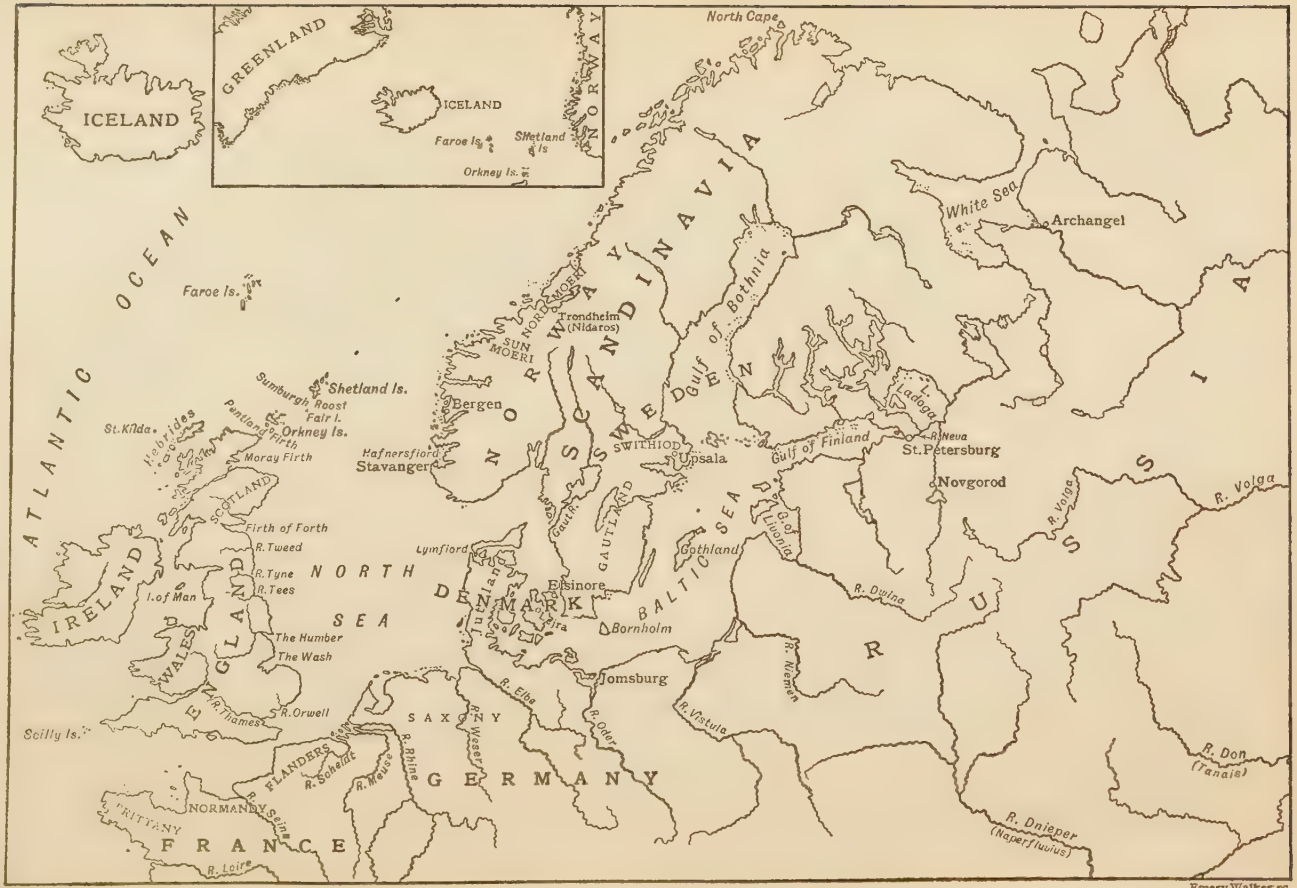
First of all, the movement must be considered as a whole, not judged by its effects on any one part of the islands, or by the supposed goodness or badness of any one man concerned. The Roman occupation and its benefits only touched the larger island south of the Forth and Clyde; the Saxon invasion only touched the eastern half of this. But every part of Britain, even the smallest of its many islands, felt for 300 years the full effect of the raids of the Northmen; and their final conquest of England, which brought us back once more into the stream of European life, helped to connect the unconquered parts of the islands more closely with the Continent and with Rome. It is the only invasion of Britain, in the course of her history, which has affected all parts of the islands.

We must bear in mind that there was no national life whatever among the Western peoples. Government was the extremest application of local home rule.

Each chief administered the territory of his tribe, and defended it against the attacks of other tribes, subject only to the mutual relation of overlord and sub-king, which gave the sub-king the right to call on his overlord for help or for arbitration in case of attack from outside.

There was no provision for unity against external invasion. These tribal relations between the overlord and his tributary, which might work fairly well in internal struggles which gave time for a leisurely mustering of forces, broke down utterly in the face of a sudden attack from an uncertain quarter by a foreign foe. The normal condition of all Europe then and for long after was one of such universal and unceasing war, that the news that a shipload of foreigners had landed on the coast, that, in the course of trade, they had quarrelled with the people, and that in the end they had put to sea carrying off all people and cattle and everything in sight, which was not "too hot or too heavy," would only concern the king, or even the earl, if the raid was on a sufficiently large scale to affect his revenue. If the raid took place in one of the under States, it would not concern him at all. Such a matter would be met in the first instance by local authority; and, if the raiders had not escaped beyond reach, redress might depend largely on the profits which the local chief had got through the trading. Besides, there would always be two sides to the story. The custom of selling kinfolk as slaves was so universal in those days of famine that it would always be open to the seaman to swear that he had bought his booty in the open market; and to the native, when he had really done so, to swear that they had been seized. I do not see how any effective remedy could have been employed in the case of isolated raids and plunder by men who were the merchants of the world at that time. No doubt it may have been very difficult to distinguish the plunderer from the peaceable merchant, but that many of them were merchants in the first instance, and that they alternately traded and plundered, is of the essence of the story.

We must also bear in mind that the Scandinavians of the coasts east of the Scheldt not only engrossed all the trade at that time, but may almost be said to have been the only seamen. The fear of conflict with them kept other races off the sea; and, like all traders, they were not slow to improve the impression. All traders then went fully armed



Map IX

Emery Walker sc.

and in bands for safety, so when a group of Viking ships filled with armed men entered a harbour, there would be no reason to suppose that they came for other purpose than peaceful trade. They might collect what the chroniclers call a "fleet," and yet be to outward appearances only a company of merchants.

They used a regular commercial route across Russia from the east to the Baltic, to the great fair of Elsinore, and the island depots of Gothland and Bornholm, through which came to the British isles all the luxuries of the East, silks and silver and jewels and spices, in exchange for surplus population, cattle, and tin. The Saxon or the Irishman would suffer a good deal of disorder, especially if it did not concern him personally, before he would divert the course of so valuable a trade.

And he had good ground for hesitation. The Northmen were, in every respect, better equipped for war.

They had constant intercourse with the still splendid empire of the East; they were schooled by their neighbourhood to the German Empire, which had lately taught them several severe lessons. Their wits were quickened by the rivalries of commerce; the rough usage of the sea had formed a habit of prompt judgment; they had opportunities on their voyages for gauging their own strength and others' weakness.

A compact force, well-armed, accustomed to quick movements, tied by no needs of home defence, no fear of famine, no necessity for keeping open communications, able to choose their own objective, and to vary it secretly at pleasure, and able to cloak their operations under pretence of trade; it is small wonder that they conquered and settled as they pleased, the Western tribes being unable to withstand them.

But, over and above all this, the Northmen possessed certain advantages which, in themselves, would go far to account for their superiority in war.

They had learnt from the Eastern empire, with which they traded, to use chain armour in the place of the saffron linen tunics of the Irish, or the woollen garments of Wessex;

they had learnt the art of throwing up fortifications for defence, and they understood the necessity for discipline. Over the half-armed and half-fed militia levies called away from their crops and their cattle to follow their chief for a set term, fighting with one eye on the foe and one on home and famine, the Northmen had in all these matters an overwhelming superiority, but especially in the use of armour.

In fact, there is not so very much difference between these armoured Vikings and the mailed knights who fought on either side in the French wars of the English Edwards and Henries. Both alike owed their superiority mainly to the armour which made them invincible to the attacks of the common man, and both alike regarded the common man and women and children as possessing no features of a common humanity which the armoured man was bound to regard.

The chief object of both, the paid mercenaries of Edward and Philip VI and the Northmen who followed the Olafs and the Sigurds, was plunder, either in the form of precious stuffs and metals, or of captives and cattle. But there was a difference in their methods of war. War in both cases was, like our politics, a game to be played according to prescribed rules. But the Viking played the game as one who risked his life freely, and might expect to lose it. He might be taken prisoner, and held for a ransom; but, as a rule, he despised death, and himself made captives only of handsome women and girls and boys. The Edwardian knight also played the game, but with him loss of life was the exception. He expected, as a matter of course, that if he failed in the combat he would be made a prisoner, and pay a ransom for his release. Neither obeyed any national call, or followed any national leader. The sole object was plunder; as result, neither left permanent impress on the countries which he ravaged and invaded. There only remains that the one was called a pagan pirate, and the other a Christian knight.

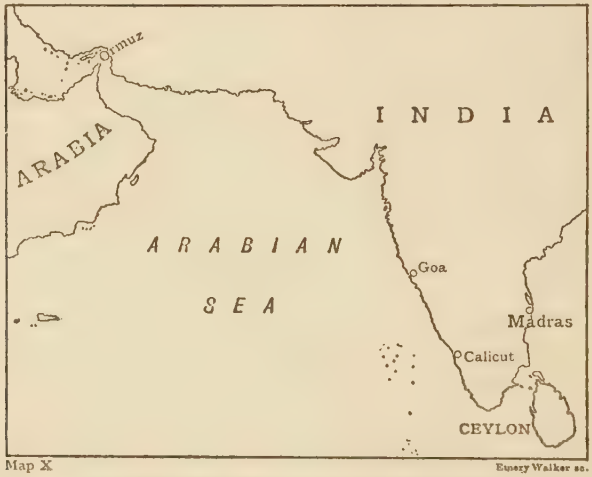
It must be remembered that this Viking invasion was an invasion by races kindred to the invaded, and that conquest was the more easy on that account, kinship weakening the

distinction between foe and friend. But this tie of kin made the pagans accessible through missionaries of their common race to a faith which would find with them ready acceptance. To men who held their lives as cheap as the water they sailed over, the God who gave his life for his fellows would appeal with an intense force, especially if the story were brought to them by fearless men, holding their own lives cheap, and willing, as were the early missionaries, whether British or Roman, to split a foeman's skull in defence of their converts in a tribal quarrel. So it happened that paganism, which was perhaps the excuse for their ill-faith,[1] faded away, as they conquered or fought with the Christian, whose faith was often his military weakness.

There is a very close parallel, in many respects, between these Scandinavian invaders of Britain and the Portuguese, Dutch, English, and French, who, in the sixteenth century, fitted out armed trading expeditions to the East and to Hindostan. To us these European nations are distinct; but I question much if they were so to the Indian of the sixteenth century, any more than the Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, and Normans were to the people whose lands they raided. They were, in consequence, spoken of by the monastic chroniclers of England, whose authority has been followed by our historians, in the mass as "Danes," just as the Saracens called all the Europeans Franks, and as the people of Hindostan called Europeans Feringhis. This has had an unhappy result in blinding the eyes of our historians to the part played by the Norwegians in the invasion and settlement of Britain, causing them to lose sight of the rivalry between the Norwegians and Danes. This use of the word "Danish" is the more unfortunate, because in some cases it is not easy to decide with certainty to which nationality a leader belonged. Their forces were no doubt not recruited exclusively from their own people. There

[1] Query, was their ill-faith a fact? We have no evidence of it, except the assertion of the chroniclers of the invaded, to whom such an assertion would be very natural. And query also whether the undoubted instances of their ill-faith quoted were not merely instances of a standard of morality common in that age to their accusers as well as to them.

were very likely Danes in the armies of Rollo and his descendant William, though both leaders were Norwegian. Just as the European nations fought with each other over the trade and spoil of the Indies, the different hordes of Northmen fought from time to time over each other's settlements for trade. In both cases the trade began with the seizure or cession of depots for goods acquired by trade or plunder, such as Thanet, Dublin, Man, Wight, and the Orkneys, and Goa, Calicut, Madras, and Ormuz. In



THE STOREHOUSES OF THE EAST—INDIA

both cases the settlements met at first with friendly acceptance, on account of the advantages of trade; in both cases the course of conquest went through the three stages of casual settlement, settlement in force, and final occupation and conquest.

It is necessary to distinguish in this period between alleged acts of treachery and bad faith towards enemies with whom the leaders of the Northmen had entered into binding engagements, and the desertion of one leader for another, which was a feature of political existence and an essential element in all warfare up to the sixteenth century. As I have said, there was no national life whatever now and for

long after in such sense that men would defend the territories beyond the boundary of the lands of their tribe or shire, as being part of a country belonging to their race, endeared to them by the traditions of the great deeds of their forefathers, and held together by the strong hand of one ruler. In consequence, the defence in all parts of the islands was liable to be suddenly paralysed by a change of sides at critical moments, when either native leaders, such as Wulfnoth or Elfric in Wessex, Mailmora of Leinster or Brian Boru of Munster, or the Northmen hired by the native king, saw that better chance of plunder or better terms for their following could be obtained by joining the invaders. Occasionally, some part of the Northmen changed sides and took service under a native ruler, as the French or British in India joined with native princes against the other. But this was not very common, as there was much less plunder to be got from the Northmen than from the islands. This change of sides on occasion was so much a matter of course in those days, that it was not, as a rule, commented upon adversely by the chroniclers of the times. It is generally sadly mentioned, without any comment, as of the desertion of Wulfnoth ("he then went out and enticed ships unto him until he had twenty"), and as if it were a condition to be expected and provided against in all the warfare of that time, when loyalty was personal only.

The reader should keep this in mind in forming a judgment of the events of this period, as in the hands of the twelfth-century Benedictines, who brought to bear on tribal disorder the unifying doctrines of Rome, and in the hands of the nineteenth-century historian who followed their Latin to the exclusion of the records in other languages, this natural condition is treated as showing either want of moral sense on the part of the tribal chief, or such superlative moral sense that the change of sides is to be attributed to the wickedness of the overlord whom he deserted.

And finally, to all the foregoing causes we must add the elemental powers, unmentioned by the ancient chronicler or by the modern historian, but more decisive of victory

than any efforts of man—namely, fog and storm. Many times during the disturbed reign of Ethelred II the unmentioned fog in the narrow channel must have enabled the Vikings to slip by the watching ships at Sandwich, and the storm forced the defenders to take refuge in the estuary of the Thames.

The success of the invasion, so far as it was successful, was due in every case largely to the impossibility of the men of the islands collecting on short notice at any one point a force sufficient to oppose the discipline of a small body of well-armed men, and to the moral effect produced by the constant uncertainty as to the next time and point of attack, the most demoralising influence in all war.

The impossibility of collecting a fleet of boats at all, except from the immediate vicinity of the expected attack, threw in after times on the ports of Sussex and Kent the defence for hundreds of years from French invasion. When a fleet was required elsewhere, as by Ethelred on the north-west coast in the year 1000, it could only have been recruited from the coast north of Anglesea. The time taken and the risk run in rowing boats round the cliff-bound coasts of Cornwall and Wales preclude the possibility of any part of the levy having been made except on the adjoining coast in actual vessels.

CHAPTER VI

THE SECOND SCANDINAVIAN INVASION

I. The Beginnings of Invasion

Egbert, before his accession, had been for some years an exile at the court of Charlemagne. He had probably witnessed the coronation at Rome, and must have realised that his ascendancy over the other tribes would be helped by the unity of the Church in all countries as represented by the monastic institutions responsible to Rome alone. The thought which produced the revival of monasticism was beginning to make a great stir in Europe, to be felt to the remotest limits of the Christian world. It was hardly likely that a prince who had seen the coronation of Charlemagne in Rome would overlook its significance.

Egbert's overlordship over the other English[1] states seemed for the time to be more of a reality than that of his predecessors. He enforced his supremacy over the Welsh, and he received the nominal submission even of the Pictish kings, who were in their turn uniting the tribes under one head.

It is most likely that this unity was hastened not only by the raids of the Northmen, but by the fear occasioned by the neighbourhood of the new Roman emperor, who might very well have revived the memories of Roman dominion over Britain if he had possessed an adequate navy. But it was as much as he could do to defend his own shores from the Scandinavian seamen.

These Northmen conquered and occupied Russia and began their expeditions to the West at about the same time.

[1] The name Anglia was used instead of Britain of the Southern country, at a Witan at Winchester in the year 800.

They had attacked Britain before Egbert's accession. In 787 the Saxon Chronicler records that three ships of the Northmen had come to England,[1] and had slain the reeve who went to meet them, and in 793 they sacked Holy Island, and in 794 ravaged North Humbria. About 795 we have records of their sailing round the Orkneys and along the west coast of Scotland and the coast of Wales as far south as Glamorgan, trading and plundering this coast and the coast of Ireland and the Isle of Man, at the same time that they attacked the new empire of Charlemagne at the mouth of the Rhine. In 798 they attacked Holm Peel on the west coast of Man, in 802 and 806 Iona, and in 811–813 and 815–816 they made expeditions inland in Ulster, where they were stoutly met. Between 836–840 Dublin and Limerick were founded by them, and after 850, when they ravaged Anglesey, Wales suffered terribly from their invasions.

The monasteries and churches on the numerous islands were a great temptation even to the peaceful trader. As being places of comparative peace, they had become the banks in which valuables were deposited for greater safety, and they were not prepared for defence. The Northmen plundered one monastery after another in Ireland, beginning with Columba's church at Lambay, near Dublin.

Egbert in 835 had had to meet a combination of the Welsh in Cornwall, and "a great hostile fleet," coming apparently from the east along the south coast, which he defeated decisively at a place called Hengeston. From this time forth, bodies of Northmen ravaged all the south coasts of Britain, wintering for the first time in the Isle of Thanet in 851, where the Jutes had settled four hundred years before, and from thence sacking London and Canterbury, and in 855 in the Island of Sheppey, at the mouth of the Thames, where they could watch for and intercept ships coming to London. These formed convenient points for attack on the French and

[1] This is the first appearance in our history of the Norwegians. It is not likely that the Chronicle would record the arrival of ships from Denmark, as there is no reason to suppose that communication with Denmark had been interrupted since the settlements from that coast in the fifth century. Out of Hœrethaland (Hordaland in Norway) the Chronicler says.

Flemish coasts. In 860 they stormed and sacked Winchester, one of the very few instances mentioned of attacks by them on fortified towns in Wessex, but were met and driven off by the men of Hants and Berks. From thenceforward the ball was thrown backwards and forwards between the islands and the Continent at the will of the invader.

At first these raids would seem to have been local disorders of trading parties, such as may have been committed by the first European traders to India and the East, without any definite object but the profits of trade, discovery, and adventure—disorder met by local force without any assistance from the federal power. The local chief considered that he had done quite enough when he had repulsed the attack on his own territory and driven the Northmen across the borders to his neighbour.

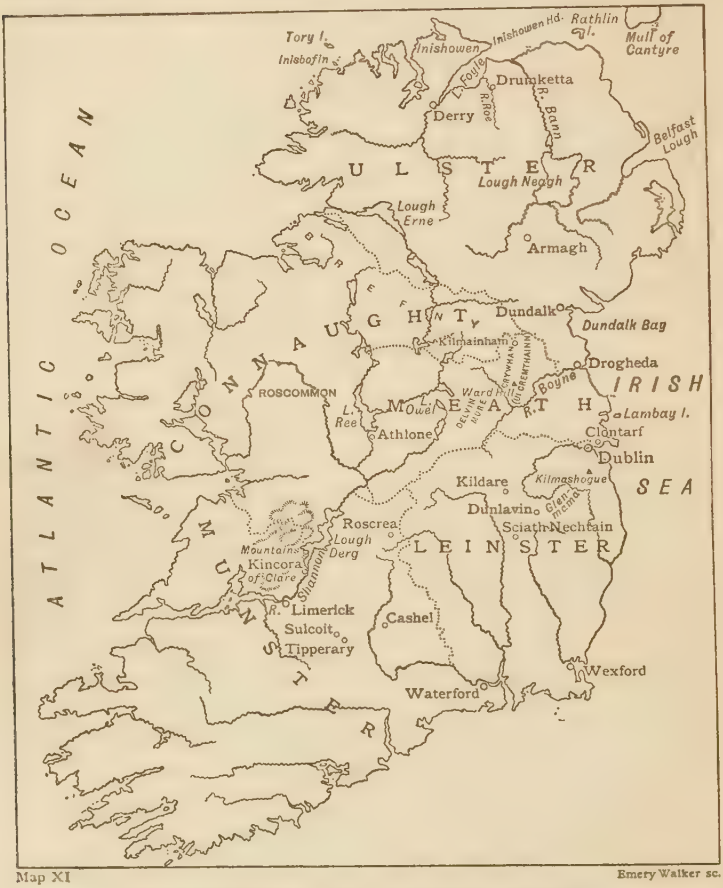
II. Malachi I and Thorgils

The Northmen from the first found Ireland an easy country to plunder, and it soon became their headquarters for assaults on any part of the islands. The defence was weak and disunited, and they soon made settlements on the coast from which they traded with or plundered the country inland. In 832 the island was attacked in force for conquest. One Thorgils, or Turgesius, came with several fleets, and combined under him the different parties of Northmen. He appears to have intended to establish a pagan Norse kingdom in Ireland, like Penda of Mercia, and for the time he succeeded.

No Norse raids could make the internal conditions of Ireland worse than it was at that time. The kings of Munster and Ulster were warring against one another for the supreme kingship, and plundering and burning the entire country in their raids.

Thorgils attacked them from all sides. He made a settlement in Dundalk Bay; he sailed up the Bann into Lough Neagh in Ulster, and up the Shannon into Lough Ree. From these points, especially from Lough Ree, the centre of

Ireland, he commanded the whole country for many years, reducing the quarrelsome chiefs under his authority, and being acknowledged by all the Northmen as leader. He plundered all the monastic establishments within reach,



Map XI Emery Walker sc.

THE LADDERS OF THE NORTHMEN—IRELAND

sacked and occupied Armagh, his wife holding a daily audience on the high altar as a throne, and he fortified posts at Dublin, Limerick, and other places on the coast. In fact, he governed as real king of Ireland, with the support of his few men in chain armour.

This unity of the Northmen was met in the end by a corresponding drawing together of the Irish tribes. In 846 the king of Meath, Malachi I, became king of Ireland. He received from the other kings rather more than the qualified and fitful obedience which in those days was accorded to the Ardri or supreme king, and with their assistance he commenced vigorous operations to enforce his authority over the Northmen, as did Alfred of Wessex in the south afterwards.

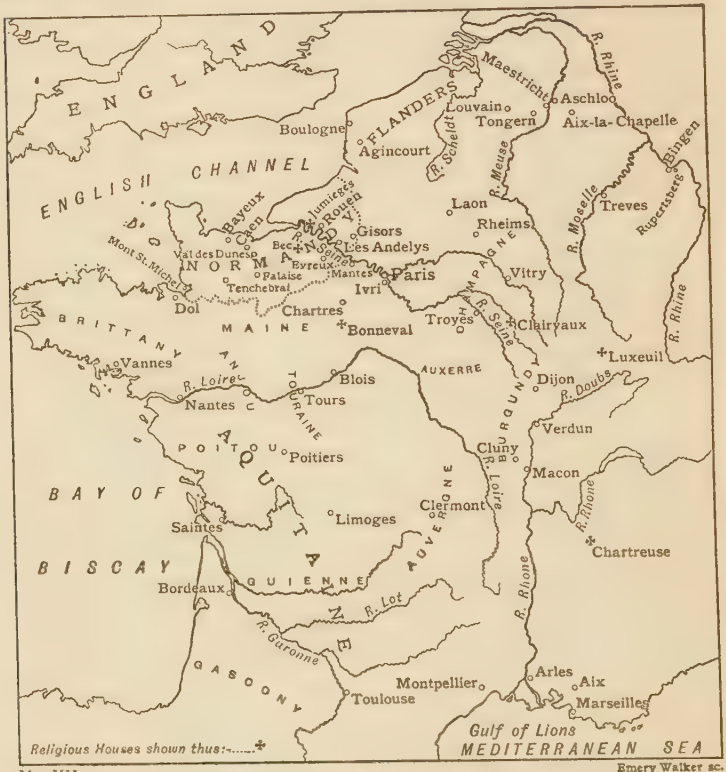
In the end he met with success. Taking Thorgils prisoner in 845, he had him drowned in Lough Owel in Westmeath. In the same year in which this happened occurred an affair called the fair of Roscrea, an incident which shows the close connection existing between trade and plunder, and illustrates the difficulty of dealing with the armed Scandinavian trader, whose services to trade were of so much value. This fair was held at Roscrea in Tipperary on June 29. A large body of Northmen, as apparent merchants, went armed "to ruffle and spoyle the faire" (as Richard the First's mercenaries from Normandy afterwards spoiled the merchants of Flanders), but the Irish buyers and sellers were many and well armed, and overpowered and killed the raiders.

Malachi met with such marked success in his overthrow of Thorgils that he sent ambassadors to Charles the Bald, king of France, to tell him of his victories, and to ask leave to pass through the territories of Charles on pilgrimage to Rome.

III. The Empire of Charlemagne

Charles's own efforts to check the advance of the Northmen had been disastrously unsuccessful. He was helpless for the protection of his subjects. He does not seem to have made any serious effort to fight the Northmen, but met their raids with negotiation and bribery. Neither he nor the kings of Wessex before Alfred would seem to have made any effort to fit out a fleet to keep the Channel clear. It is impossible to say how far the complications of trade or want of revenue compelled towards this course.

The Northmen had from the first done much more harm to France than to Britain. At the beginning of the ninth century, they attacked the empire of Charlemagne at the mouth of the Rhine, and using, as it has been said, the rivers like the steps of a ladder, by which to advance south, they



Map XII. Emery Walker sc.

THE LADDERS OF THE NORTHMEN—GAUL

entered in turn the Rhine, the Scheldt, the Seine, the Loire, and the Garonne.

Sometimes they settled and occupied the country, as on the Scheldt and Seine; at other times they established trading stations; at other times they plundered and put to sea again with the spoils, or, obtaining horses by force, fear, or a desire to be rid of them at any cost, they rode through

the country at full speed, returning with their spoil to their ships before an effective force could be collected to destroy them. In 844–850 they reached the Garonne, sacked Limoges, Saintes, Bordeaux, and many other towns, and were admitted to plunder Toulouse for a money payment to its ruler.

The treaty of Verdun, which partitioned among the sons of the emperor the empire of Charlemagne, destroyed in 843 the one central authority which might have combined the tribes to control them.

I have already pointed out that the mode of dealing with these sudden and savage attacks of an enemy who, coming out of the sea, disappeared almost before the news of his coming was known, would be to meet force by force locally. Where the local defence was not sufficiently strong, the over-kings of the different countries had to devise means to meet the difficulty. They could either unite, calling on their respective followings for assistance, to defeat the invasion while protecting peaceful Scandinavian traders,[1] or they could hire naval mercenaries,[2] or they might buy off the enemy from their immediate territory, leaving him to prey on their neighbours,[3] or they might allow him to settle in exposed parts, and become a buffer against further invasions.[4] All these methods were used in dealing with the Northmen.

IV. The Danes come to Ireland

The Northmen in Ireland at Thorgils' death had not been driven out, but, ceasing to be under one head, they ceased to be supreme. About 850, either in spite of Malachi's brilliant defence or in consequence of a treaty for trade entered into with him, they were settled in Dublin,

[1] As did Malachi I and Malachi II in Ireland, and Alfred in Wessex in 884.

[2] As Dunstan employed Maccus, and Ethelred II Olaf Trygvasson, Thurkill, and Olaf the Saint.

[3] As did Alfred in 871–876, Ethelred II from 991 onwards, and William the Conqueror in 1069.

[4] As Alfred ceded East Anglia in 878, and Charles the Simple Normandy in 911.

Limerick, and Waterford (which became from henceforth Norwegian towns governed by Scandinavian kings), and at several other points along the coast and on the islands of Ireland's great rivers. Here they built up towns protecting their trading posts with military fortresses, regulated commerce, and made their own laws and regulations. These settlers very soon became Christian.

Possibly the Irish king may have intended these settlements to hold in check, and be responsible for, any further invasions of raiders.

These first Northmen were from Norway. Their superior knowledge of fortification made it very easy for them to hold their fortresses on occasion against the native Irish. They had frequent disputes with the Irish, who inflicted on them many defeats, one notably at Sciath Nechtain in 848, when twelve hundred of them fell with their leader Tomar, the "tanist" of the king of Norway, whose "collar of gold" was captured by Malachi II in 980, after Tara.

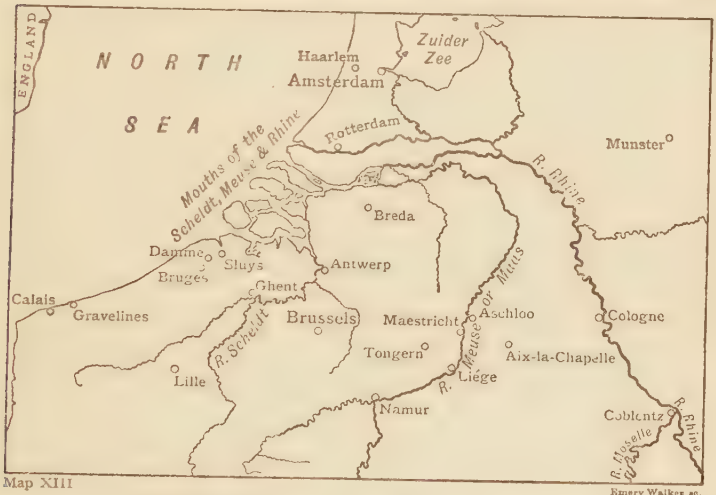
In 852 a more formidable enemy appeared. A fleet of Danes, under the command of one Horm, Guthrum or Gormo (he was killed in 855 by Roderick king of Wales), came to Dublin. They fought with and twice defeated the Norwegians, who up to that time had been in possession, and took their fortresses. From henceforth the two hordes, like the British and French in India, fought frequently with each other, and were always ready to combine with or against the Irish.

V. The Raids in Wessex

In the meantime, Ethelwulf, Egbert's son, king of Wessex (836–858), met the Northmen as they plundered in his territory by using force with varied success. He defeated them in 851 at Ockley in Surrey, and his son Athelstan won a naval battle off Sandwich.

In the last days of his life he went on pilgrimage to Rome, showing that although these raids of the Northmen hold a large space in the chronicle of the terrified monk, they had only then a small one in actual fact. He visited

on the way Charles the Bald of France, and brought back with him as his bride (he being over fifty and she twelve) Judith, Charles's daughter, very likely as part of a treaty of alliance between the two kings against the Northmen and the Britons of Brittany, Cornwall, and Wales. Ethelwulf had given his own daughter to Burhed king of Mercia, as part of an alliance against the Welsh. These alliances form very important links in history, as they were often the only means at that time of inducing the different tribes or



THE STOREHOUSES OF THE WEST—FLANDERS

nations to forego their rivalry and to unite against a foreign invader.

On the death of Ethelwulf, Judith was married to her step-son Ethelbald, who succeeded him. But the Church obliged him to divorce her, and she returned to France and married Baldwin, count of Flanders, that triangle of flat land lying between the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Scheldt, which served as the receivers' shop for the stolen goods of the pirates and a trading mart for their exchanges.

Elstruith, the daughter of Alfred, Ethelbald's brother, married Baldwin II, the son of Judith, and their direct descendant was Matilda, the wife of William the Conqueror.

Ethelwulf was succeeded by four stalwart sons in succession. During the reigns of the two first, Ethelbald and Ethelbert (858–866), there was comparative peace in Wessex, the Northmen turning their attention mainly to Ireland and France, though this does not mean that Wessex was entirely exempt from attack.

But there is one disturbing entry in the Saxon Chronicle under date 865: "This year the heathen army sat down in Thanet, and made peace with the men of Kent, *and the men of Kent promised them money for the peace;* and during the peace and the promise of money the army stole away by night, and ravaged all Kent to the eastward."

The history of the Northmen's raids for the next 200 years on Wessex might almost be summed up in the story of Thanet, and the peace promised for money and the broken faith. Society was in that liquid state when no tribal ruler, though he professed to be the man of some neighbouring king to secure his safety, concerned himself with the happenings beyond his own border.

It was cheaper to make peace for Kent, and to persuade the army to move into Wessex or East Anglia, than to meet them in doubtful battle with a local force. By the time the chief had informed his overlord, who was very probably enforcing his superiority over the West Welsh in Cornwall, of the raid on Kent, the heathen army would have lifted everything in sight, and have sailed to the Humber or the Garonne. Or very likely they would have waited until the Wessex king with his forces reached the borders of Kent, and then have sped round the coast to harry Dorset in his absence.

The death of Ethelbert in 866 coincides roughly with the close of this first period,[1] when plundering raids took place from time to time in different parts, but not necessarily by the same men, who came from the Baltic to trade. This period corresponds, I would suggest, to the armed trading expeditions of the Europeans to the Indies in the sixteenth

[1] Ireland seems to have had rest during the last twenty years of the ninth century and until about 915.

century, which were accompanied, no doubt, with much disorder and plunder, by parties of the Europeans, but not to such an extent as to induce the Eastern rulers to forbid trade altogether.

From now on the invasion is more definite and determined, and it has to be met by more definite action of the native leaders.

VI. Ireland, North Humbria, and Wessex

In 853 a fresh force had appeared in Ireland under a leader named Olaf the White. He stayed but a short time, returning in 856, when he disputed the sovereignty of Ireland with the Irish Ardris, in conjunction with another famous chieftain, Ivar (son of the half legendary Ragnar Lodbrok), the ancestor of Scandinavian kings of Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick, called by the *Annals of Ulster* "Rex Nordmannorum totius Hiberniæ et Britanniæ." A few years later, about 866, the year when Ethelred I became king of Wessex, Olaf crossed to Scotland, where he "ravages all Pictland, and takes its hostages," while Ivar sailed round to East Anglia, where the Angles "made peace" with him, and provided him with horses.

In the following year the two chiefs joined forces, and went over the Humber to York.

Civil war was going on between two claimants to the throne. The Northmen defeated the North Humbrians, killed the king Ella, and settled the part south of the Tweed. Then, using York as headquarters, they plundered in Lothian and in Mercia, whose king called on Ethelred and Alfred for help. It was rendered, but no battle took place, the king "making peace" for his territory.

Bands of the Northmen then went into East Anglia, where they were opposed by the king, Edmund. They defeated and captured him, and on his refusing to abjure his religion, they are said to have shot him to death with their arrows.[1] They then settled this part, which, already largely

[1] Probably a fictitious imitation of St. Sebastian.

Map XIV

Emery Walker sc.

THE LADDERS OF THE NORTHMEN—ENGLAND

Scandinavian, was from this time under Scandinavian rulers. With the exception of the promise of help given to Mercia, Wessex stood by and looked on.

In 869–870 they went again to the north-west, attacked Cumbria and Galloway, sacked Dumbarton, and returned with a great fleet to Dublin, bringing with them numbers of Angles, Britons, and Picts as captives, leaving lieutenants in command in North Humbria and East Anglia, which were now being settled by them for cultivation. In 870 Ivar died, a Christian it is recorded through the influence of Aude, the wife of Olaf the White. Aude died in Iceland in 900.[1]

The Northmen next attacked Wessex, and were met by Ethelred and his younger brother, Alfred, in several battles between Reading and the Wiltshire Downs, in one of which, at Ashdown, Alfred, in command of his half of the army, charged up the steep Downs and drove the Northmen from their fortifications while Ethelred was hearing mass.[2]

VII. Alfred becomes King of Wessex. Treaty of Wedmore

Soon after this Ethelred was killed, and was succeeded by his brother Alfred.

Fresh defeats followed, and Alfred, in despair, followed the course afterwards so disastrous in the hands of Ethelred II of "buying a peace."[3]

In consequence the Northmen left Wessex and concentrated their forces on Mercia, where they drove the king from his throne (he fled to Rome), and conquered the five towns of Lincoln, Stamford, Nottingham, Derby, and Leicester, afterwards known as the five Danish burghs. They then divided forces; one body moved north again to North Humbria, where they settled as colonists, "and

[1] See Introductory chapter, p. xxxiii.

[2] There is a huge white horse several hundred feet long cut in the chalk on the side of the Downs near Uffington, in Berkshire, just below great circular entrenchments. It is believed to have been cut by the army of Alfred after this victory. It may be the Wessex dragon.

[3] William the Norman also bought a peace in 1069. See Chapter XIX.

the army subdued the land and ofttimes spoiled the Picts and the Strathclyde Britons."

The other part invaded Wessex.

Guthrum, or Gorm, the ancestor of many kings of Denmark, their leader, landed in Dorset (where Alfred is said to have defeated him in Swanage Bay), and Alfred again bought him off, the Northmen swearing by Odin's ring to leave Wessex. But they at once broke the treaty. Those who were horsed stole away by night,[1] and went round to Exeter, where Alfred successfully besieged them. They again swore that they would leave, and went to Mercia.

From this part they invaded Wessex in the spring of 878, by sea on the south, and by land across North Wiltshire. As Alfred's resources were exhausted, or as he was unprepared for fight, he had no means but to retire to the fens of Somerset at Athelney. But later in the same year he issued forth at the head of a new army of men of the west country, and completely defeated the enemy at Edington, near Westbury.[2]

This victory was followed by the Treaty of Wedmore, by which Guthrum (meaning himself and his whole following) agreed to be Christian and to acknowledge Alfred as his overlord. He was baptized at Aller, in Somerset.

Alfred abandoned all that part of the kingdom which was not in his own possession, retaining what he either held or knew he would be able to hold—that is to say, all south and west of a line drawn along the north bank of the Thames, and along the Lea, to Bedford, thence along the Ouse to Watling Street, and from Watling Street to the Welsh border at Chester. Guthrum accordingly settled in East Anglia, which, with the district west of it, thus became Christian.

The result of these campaigns was the conquest and occupation by the Northmen of a territory which was called the Danelaw (Danelagh, Danelagu). This, consisting of the Southern part of North Humbria, Eastern Mercia, East

[1] Florence enlarged this to "they killed the king's horsemen."
[2] Where is another white horse cut in the chalk.

Anglia, and the control of British Cumbria, was by far the largest settlement and conquest made by these Northmen at that time. It formed a base for future attacks on the Continent or on Ireland, becoming gradually more consolidated and strengthened up to Ethelred II's time, until the

THE DIVISION OF WEDMORE

conquest of Wessex by Canute brought all south of the Forth and Clyde for a time under one hand.

From now on the North Humbrian kings were either identical with or closely allied to the Scandinavian kings of Dublin, so that the nominal overlord, the king of Wessex, found it to his interest to acknowledge and to support these Irish Northmen, though he occasionally expelled a ruler in favour of his own Scandinavian nominee.

After Wedmore, Wessex had a respite for five years—years well employed by Alfred for purposes of defence.

He seems to have grasped the idea that islands with an extended seaboard could not be successfully defended by any militia, however well organised, against an enemy who could land at any point on the coast, and get away before an effective force could be collected to oppose them, and that the only effective reply to such invasion was a naval counter attack. When the Northmen again attacked Wessex, Alfred organised a raiding expedition, for the purposes of plunder, by sea to the coast of East Anglia, now a Scandinavian province, where he defeated, and was in turn defeated by, the Northmen. A fresh treaty gave him London and a part of Essex.

During the course of Alfred's reign the smaller princes of Wales had either become tributary to Wessex or had entered into alliance with Alfred, acknowledging him as overlord. Just before this time Wales had acknowledged for the moment as overlord one of its own chiefs, Roderick the Great (844–877). Roderick had inherited from his father the division of Powys, from his mother that of Gwynnedd, and took with his wife South Wales. Over all Wales, where he was not actual ruler, he exercised a supervising authority. But at his death this unity was broken up finally until the conquest by England. About 891 Amarawd, the son of Roderick, the chief king in Wales, after trying unsuccessfully a combination with the Scandinavians of North Humbria against Wessex, acknowledged Alfred's supremacy, bringing practically the whole of Wales under his protection.

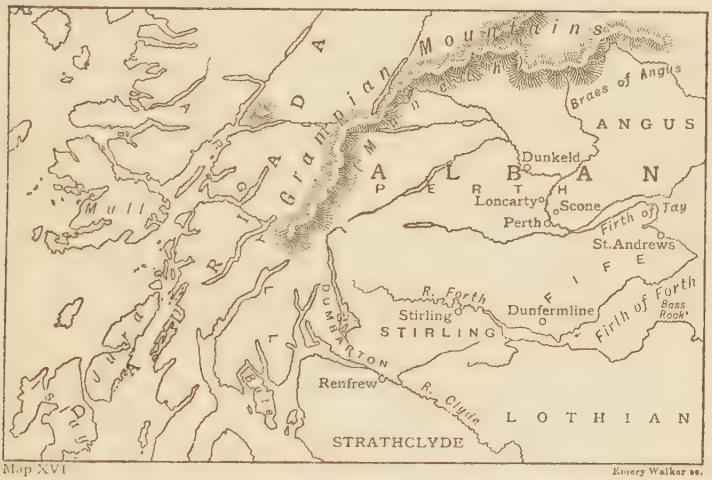
When the Northmen next attacked Wessex on the south-east, this alliance with the Welsh princes protected Alfred on the west from an attack in the back by the Irish Norse through Anglesea and the Dee.

VIII. The Elemental Kingdom of Scotland

After the invasion of North Humbria by Olaf and Ivar the energy of the Northmen in Ireland seems to have diminished, and they crossed to Scotland, where they fought a great battle with the Picts under Constantine III, son of Kenneth,

in 877, resulting, according to one authority (*Annals of Ulster*), in the victory of the Northmen and the death of Constantine; and, according to another authority (*Chronicon Scotorum*), in the victory of the Picts and the death of Olaf. With some exceptions there is a lull in Irish affairs from this time until about 915.

In Scotland a perpetual war was being carried on between Picts and Northmen for a hundred years on the east coast



THE BEGINNINGS OF THE KINGDOM OF SCOTLAND

round the Firth of Forth, and to the north and west. The Picts helped to prevent the Northmen from settling to any great extent to the south of them in Lothian, though their measure of success was as varied as that of Alfred. The coast line on the east made the plundering expeditions less easy, as there were fewer convenient ports for retreat. On the west coast the Northmen gradually occupied all the islands and controlled the mainland.

The settlements of the Northmen in Ireland and on the west coast of Scotland had important results in the latter country. Sometime about 840 they had invaded the territory of the Picts of Argyle and inflicted on them a crushing defeat. About the same time Kenneth MacAlpin became

king of the Scots, and two years later, either with the assistance of the Northmen, or in consequence of this defeat as an alliance of defence against them with the Picts, he became king of the Argyle Picts.

This elemental kingdom of Scotland only comprised the counties of Argyle, Dumbarton, Stirling, Fife, and Perth. South of it was to the west the still British Cumbria or Strathclyde, over-run by the Northmen from Ireland, and to the east English Bernicia, the part of North Humbria between the Forth and the Tees. On the west coast and in the north the Norwegians gradually became masters.

The wars between the Scandinavian rulers,[1] which gradually led to the unity of Norway and of Denmark under federal rulers, and later the introduction of Christianity, which coincided with the second phase of this struggle, drove out to sea a number of irresponsible pagans for plunder and settlement. In 880 Harold Fairhair raided the Western Isles, Scotland, and Man, and temporarily cleared out the pirates. After this Galloway became a Norse colony.

By the end of the ninth century the Northmen had settled in force in the Shetlands, the Orkneys, the Hebrides, and Skye; they had possession of Caithness and Sutherland (the land south of the Orkneys) as far as Oykel and Shin, they controlled the coast of Ross and Moray, Argyll and Galloway, and they conquered Man. From this territory, some of which did not leave Norwegian hands until late in the fifteenth century, they threatened alike the coast of Ireland, the Firth of Clyde, Cumbria, and Wales.

[1] See Chapter VIII, "Scandinavia."

CHAPTER VII

ALFRED IN WESSEX

After Wedmore, operations in France gave a short relief to the islands.

Hasting, a noted Norse leader, after ravaging North-eastern France for some years, attacked Paris. Charles the Bald entered into a treaty with him, and bought him off with large gifts, making him count of Chartres.

But in 885, seven years after Wedmore, an enormous force of Northmen, under a Norwegian named Rollo, a son of a Norwegian chief called Rognwald, earl of Moeri, and nephew of Sigurd, earl of the Orkneys, made their way up the Seine, and, after taking Rouen, besieged Paris.

Gorm, who became the first king of all Denmark, had gone early on a Viking cruise along the coast, with a few choice spirits, who had a recruiting stand and plunder warehouse at Aschloo, on the Maas.[1] From this point they pillaged Maestricht, Louvain, and Tongern, and even stripped the tomb of Charlemagne at Aix of its jewels and ornaments. Charles the Fat advanced against them with a large force, but paid them off instead of fighting them, on the terms that they would break up their plunder-post and be baptized. When Rollo moved up the Seine to Paris, Gorm and his companions joined them.

The city was splendidly defended for thirteen months by Eudes, count of Paris, and Bishop Gozlin, at the end of which time Charles the Fat bought off the invaders, and sent them to winter in Burgundy. This gave peace to Wessex, except for isolated raids, until in 893 Hasting, who had deserted Charles and joined the Northmen at the siege of Paris, invaded Britain with a large force, landing, horses and all, in Kent, where he spent the winter.

[1] Meuse.

This campaign is one of the most notable in early British history, not only as showing the tedious disjointed efforts of mediæval war, but as affording a proof of the helplessness of the island, even with this great king on the throne, with its temporary army of farming men, frantic to get back to their homes, and its temporary navy of little boats, wearily watching through the rain for an enemy who has probably landed elsewhere, both army and navy called out for a set term only, and ready to throw down their weapons and steer their ships to land at the moment in which the term expired, as against an enemy few in numbers, but a mobile, organised, and permanent force of trained soldiers, with superior weapons, wearing chain armour, and having command of the sea.

No effort was made to prevent the Northmen's landing. Either Alfred was not called on to assist Kent, or he was not aware of their coming, or there may have been a fog. When they arrived on the coast of Kent they towed their ships up the rivers and built themselves fortresses, Hasting sailing round to the mouth of the Thames, and there throwing up an entrenchment for himself.

In this part of Kent, which was then a dense forest, they remained unmolested for a twelvemonth. Then the North Humbrians and East Angles, who had given their pledges for peace to Alfred, joined in the Northmen's raids. Thereupon Wessex became involved, and Alfred moved; and calling out one-half of his militia forces at a time, came up to watch the borders of the forest, in case either part of the enemy should come out into the open.[1]

[1] I would call attention to this raid of Hasting as an example of the spirit in which historians have treated the reigns of Alfred and Ethelred II. Ethelred is blamed because he did not sufficiently follow and attack the enemy on all occasions. Alfred is always excused or praised. Yet here he not only leaves the enemy in full possession for a twelvemonth, but when he does move he contents himself with watching them. In both cases it would seem to have been considered useless to attack the mounted Northmen with a force of infantry, unless they could be enticed sufficiently far away from their ships to give the defenders chance of attacking them in force. As soon as Hasting moves across the country Alfred dashes after him, as Ethelred flew after Canute when he went raiding in Lindsey.

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At first he kept the Northmen in check, posting himself between the East Anglians and Kent. He negotiated a treaty with Hasting, who engaged to leave the country, and sent his two sons to be baptized as an acknowledgment of the treaty. This done, instead of leaving, Hasting marched his force up on the Thames to join his confederates in Essex, for the whole Danelagh had risen to join him. But Alfred and his son Edward pursued, and came up with him at Farnham, defeated and drove him into Essex. There Alfred blockaded the invaders.

This might have been successful but that the time for service of the Saxon militia expired while the blockade was in progress. Alfred left the army for Wessex to fetch the other half of his militia. In his absence the time-expired men raised the blockade and dispersed for their homes, meeting the king advancing with fresh forces as they were returning home.

Alfred now heard that the enemy from North Humbria and East Anglia had sailed round to the south coast to attack Exeter. Leaving a force to beleaguer the Northmen in Essex, he hurried to the West. The force left behind, with the assistance of the Londoners, attacked and took the defences of the enemy in the absence of a raiding expedition of their chief, while Alfred threw himself into Exeter, which he relieved, the Northmen sailing away to the south-east coast.

Hasting meanwhile, reinforced from the north, sailed up the Thames as far as his ships would go, and then, sending them back, marched across to the Severn, probably expecting aid from the Northmen of the Irish ports or from the Welsh tribes.

Alfred's levies came up with Hasting near Welshpool, on the Severn, and besieged him for some weeks. But in the end he broke out and marched back across the island to Essex. Here, collecting a fresh force, and leaving with the East Anglians his ships and his plunder, he marched again quickly across to Chester, whither he was followed by an army under Ethelred, the earl of Mercia. Ethelred did

not persist in a siege, only laying waste the country round Chester, and Hasting, unable to maintain his army, after eating his horses, recrossed by a circuitous march to Essex. Here he towed his ships into the river Lea, and built a fort to protect them, some twenty miles north of London.

Alfred now made a great coup by cutting new channels for the Lea, leaving the ships of the Northmen high and dry; he built forts to cut them off from the sea and to protect his workmen. He captured their fleet, and they followed the old tactics, leaving their plunder with the East Anglians, while they once more crossed to the Severn. Alfred followed them to Bridgnorth, where they remained a month, apparently unmolested, after which their force broke up, and Hasting crossed again to France, leaving Britain in peace.

In these marches across the island Alfred evidently dare not make any move which would leave Wessex open to the invader. He kept within his own boundaries, as Ethelred II did after him, treating the country beyond as an enemy's territory. The repeated march of Hasting across to the west was meaningless unless he expected help from that side. The kings of Wessex were always uneasy about the possession of Chester. According to the Welsh authorities, one Ingimund, a Norwegian from Dublin, landed in 901 at Holyhead and marched across to the mouth of the Dee to settle. Ethelred of Mercia is repairing the walls of Chester between 901–908, and in 909 the Northmen besieged it. It was the key of Wessex to the north-west seas.

In 901 Alfred died. The exhaustion of the country was very great during the last years of his reign, the mortality among men and cattle by disease and famine being no doubt far greater than the losses in battle with the Northmen. The most serious losses in warfare were the deaths of bold and experienced leaders, a loss more severely felt as the struggle went on.

Contemporary Kings during the Scandinavian Invasions. (C. *Christian*, P. *Pagan*.)

Wessex.	Scotland.	Ireland.	Denmark.	Norway.
Ethelwulf, 836–858.	...	Malachi I, 846–863.	...	...
Ethelbald, 858–860.	...	...	...	...
Ethelbert, 860–866.	...	...	Gorm the Old, *P.* 936.	Harold Fairhair, 933.
Ethelred I, 866–871.	...	Æd Finnlaith, 863–879.	...	(883 Hafnersfiord.)
Alfred, 871–901.	Gregory or Grig,	Flann Sinna, 879–916.	...	...
(871 Ashdown.)	875–892.			
(878 Edington.)	Donald VI, 892–903.	...	...	...
Edward the Elder,	Constantine III,	Niall Glunduff, 916–919.	...	...
901–925.	903–943.	(919 Kilmashogue.)		
Athelstan, 925–940.	(918 Corbridge-on-	Donogh, 919–944.	Harold Bluetooth,	Eric Bloodaxe,
(937 Brunanburg.)	Tyne.)		*C.* 936–985.	*P.* 933–938.
Edmund, 940–946.	Malcolm I, 943–952.	Congalach, 944–956.	...	Hakon Athelstan fostre,
Edred, 946–955.	Indulf, 952–961.	Domnal O'Neill, 956–	...	*C.* 938–963.
Edwy, *a minor*,	...	980.	...	Harold Greyfell,
955–958.		(968 Sulcoit.)		*C.* 963–976.
Edgar, *a minor*,	Duff, 961–966.	...	...	...
958–975.	Culen, 966–970.	(979 Tara.)	...	...
Edward the Martyr, *a*	Kenneth III, 970–994.	Malachi II, 980–1002.	Sweyn, *P.* 985–1014.	Hakon jarl, *P.* 976–995.
minor, 975–978.[1]	(? Lonearty.)			
Ethelred II, *a minor*,	Constantine IV,	...	(1030 Svold.)	Olaf Trygvasson,
978[1]–1014.	994–996.			*C.* 995–1000.
...	Grim, 996–1004.	(999 Glenmama.)	...	...
Sweyn, 1013–1014.	Malcolm II, 1004–1034.	Brian Boru, 1002–1014.	...	Partition, *P.* and *C.*
Ethelred II, 1014–1016.	...	(1014 Clontarf.)	...	1000–1015.
Edmund Ironside and	...	Malachi II, 1014–1022.	Harold,[2] 1014–1018.	Olaf the Saint,
Canute, 1016–1017.				*C.* 1015–1030.
(1016 Assandun.)				...
Canute, 1017–1035.	...	...	Canute, *C.* 1018–1035.	Canute, *C.* 1030–1035.
...	Duncan, 1034–1040.	...	...	...

[1] Or 979.

[2] Younger brother of Sweyn.

CHAPTER VIII

SCANDINAVIA, 850–1035

For the six hundred years which followed the first invasions from Scandinavia in the fifth century, the pagan and the Christian fought for the control of all Northern Europe. The tide flowed and ebbed as physical violence or organised self-restraint got the better; a sudden impulse to Christianity arising from some natural cause interpreted as a divine sign, or from the eloquence of some reckless missionary, was as often followed by a savage reaction to the worship of the gods of successful force. The leaders who fight on either side are, with some few exceptions, of small personal moment; the peoples over whom they rule show no perception of any insight into the ideals of their worship, but follow their leaders to the one faith or the other, as victory leans to the false god or to the true.

The whole interest of the history centres not in any individuals, though sometimes famous men, such as Alfred, Brian, the Malachis, or Olafs stand out in prominence, but in the struggle between two principles, the worship of physical courage and hardihood, which was the basic law of paganism, and the far higher moral courage, self-restraint, and self-sacrifice, the Christian's answer to brute force, which makes organised society possible. It made organised society possible then; but beautiful as it was, this vital essence of Christianity could never have succeeded in beating back the attack of barbarism from without but for the centripetal power with which the policy of the Western Church endued it. The Church discouraged wars between the tribes, uniting them in the name of religion against the pagan; it supported the central executive, which it could control, against a tribal system which meant rebellion; and it lent itself always (in

one instance at least fatally) to check the invasion by the only counter-attack possible, the conversion of the heathen by peaceful means to a religious faith with which the Viking raids were inconsistent.

In the first instance, no doubt the principle of returning good for evil, the keeping of faith with men who never kept it, the repayment of savagery by gifts for baptism and settlement, must have told against the Christian. The heathen who are paid off by Alfred, and swear by Odin's ring to leave, break their troth, and ride over Wessex; Hasting, when he has agreed to a truce, and has sent his sons to be baptized, only uses the peace given him as an opportunity to make a fresh combination for attack.

But the moral courage told in the end, and it was assisted by more worldly motives—the result of the disturbance caused by the raids. Christianity meant peace, order, and internal improvement; paganism meant adventurous violence, enterprise, and attack on any ordered government; so that the man who had captured a throne, if he were a pagan, gravitated towards Christianity and preached peace, while the man outside who wanted the throne, and had hopes of seizing it, allied himself with the pagans even if he were a nominal Christian, and connived at Viking piracy.

This colours all Scandinavian and British history until Canute, having conquered Wessex, and drawing Norway, Sweden, and Denmark into his hands, found it to his interest to make Christianity the real religion of the north.

The morality of these pagans was to love and help their friends and to hate and injure their enemies. They gave no particular consideration to the means employed to secure these ends. They believed that Thor and Odin loved men who wandered far and brought home wealth, and that in their future life they would live as they had done on earth without pain. The Viking life was their ideal. "He only was thought worthy to fully deserve the name of sea king who never slept under a sooty rafter and never drank at the hearth corner."[1]

[1] *Ynglinga Saga*, c. 34.

This period of history, when a fresh storm of pagan raiders broke on Britain from Scandinavia, is of far higher interest than that of the invasions of the fifth century. It ended in the conversion of Scandinavia, and in that conversion Britain took a very prominent part.

France, Germany, and Britain all had their share in this introduction of Christianity. Every payment off of pagan raiders by kings or chiefs in any part of the islands, or by the French kings or German emperors, was upon the understanding that they accepted baptism, which meant that they would abandon their Viking habits, and settle as good inhabitants of the country which they had raided. How far this settlement of Christian Northmen in Britain, first begun by Alfred, was carried, we can never know, but it was clearly much greater than appears from the monastic records.

In Ireland the absence of Roman unity made this influence less, but as the settlements of the Northmen there were in the nature of great trading communities in the towns, the need of peace for business gradually led them to embrace Christianity. No doubt the same influence of trade in favour of the gospel of peace was at work in other parts of the islands.

Denmark, by its close connection with Germany, owed its conversion mainly to the pressure of the German emperors. But Norway received Christianity from Britain through three great missionary martyr kings, Hakon Athelstan fostre, Olaf Trygvasson, and Olaf the Saint, two of them before conversion noted Vikings.

It is easier to understand why the sea threw up these Vikings on the coasts of Britain, if we learn what was going on in the countries from which they came. Scandinavia has always been a region very democratic, especially Norway —a country like Scotland, of mountain and flood, with a very deeply indented coast, and a soil which denied subsistence to a large population. The land was of little value[1] except

[1] Is not our custom of borough English, by which the land descends to the youngest son, a result of the traditions of our Scandinavian ancestry?

for the timber and for stock-raising, forbidding any great increase of population from farming. The extent of sea-coast encouraged seafaring life, turning the whole population of Scandinavia into traders, travellers, and pirates.

The life of the seaman lent itself to democratic ideals, and with democratic ideals to the strict military discipline which always accompanies democracy. By the Scandinavian merchant law the ships carried no cook, but the mess-mates cast lots to do the housekeeping; all drink was in common; a kettle with a lid on it, in which was the drink, stood by the mast, from which all could help themselves. But the strictest discipline was maintained, the leader possessing absolute power. The life also called for supreme courage. What sort of men these were who sailed the stormy seas of the north may be shown by an incident, after a fray, told in one of the historical Sagas of Iceland: "Snorre, Thorbrand's son, was the cheeriest of the brothers, and he sat at table by his namesake that evening, and they had curdled milk and cheese. Snorre Gode saw that his namesake did not get on with his cheese, and asked him why he ate so slowly. Snorre Thorbrand's son answered, and said that the lambs were slowest over their eating when they were fresh gagged. Then Snorre Gode felt his throat, and found an arrow stuck across the throat in the root of the tongue. Then Snorre Gode took the tweezers and pulled out the arrow-head, and after that he ate his meat."[1] It is hardly surprising that luxurious Wessex fell before such men.

The political condition of the country previous to the middle of the ninth century was that of a number of very small kingdoms or chieftainships, each with its own "Thing" or general assembly (now called in the Isle of Man the Tynwald) and its own tribal lands and customs. The Thing confirmed by election the title of the king, who had no title without such election.

Denmark was divided in much the same manner. Sweden,

[1] *Erbyggia Saga*, iv. 2, 45.

which developed later and occupied itself mainly with the Baltic, plays no part in our story by name.

The same tendency to closer union which we shall see helping the successors of Alfred in their advance northwards was at this time in action both in Norway and Denmark. One of these small kings of Norway, Halfdan the Black, had made a beginning in the middle of the ninth century by joining several other territories to his own. His son Harold Fairhair, who succeeded him, continued this process of absorption until the whole of Norway acknowledged him as overlord. He tried to put down piracy. He removed the petty kings, putting in their place jarls of his own choosing, and taking the tribe lands into his hands. The Sagas say that he made a vow not to cut or comb his hair until he had made himself master of all Norway, urged to it by Gytha, a woman who refused to marry him unless he were sole king.[1]

The petty kings did not give up without a tremendous struggle. But Harold was too much for them in the end. In 883 he routed a combination of the chiefs of Norway at the battle of Hafnersfiord (near Stavanger) much as Athelstan later defeated the combined forces of the Scots, Norse, and Welsh at Brunanburg, with the result that many of the defeated chiefs, who refused to submit, were emigrating about the end of Alfred's reign to the Orkneys, to the western islands of Scotland, to Man, Ireland, and Iceland, settling these parts both as centres of trade, depots for plunder, and winter quarters from which they could raid Norway in summer. The most important of all these outlaws, judging by after events, was Rollo, the son of Rognwald, earl of Moeri, and nephew of Sigurd, first earl of the Orkneys. Harold outlawed him for piracy; he fled to the Orkneys, and

[1] The Scandinavian Sagas are taken at full value, where there is no reason to think that their stories are fabulous, though almost all of the originals are lost. They are free from the vice of the English monastic writers, the distortion of facts to suit a religious end, and in this respect they are far more trustworthy than any of the monastic chronicles.

Written for the people in the language of the people, their stories are often very instructive and characteristic of the life of the times. See Introductory Chapter, "The Records of the Times."

afterwards led a force into France, where he ended by occupying Normandy.

Harold followed to the Orkneys to punish and raid these outlaws in his turn,[1] but did not really conquer them.

The internal disorders arising from this fresh development in Norway prevented assistance being given from Norway itself to the Northmen in Ireland or North Humbria until about the last quarter of the tenth century, the date of the accession of Ethelred II, when fresh hordes passed to the British islands.

At the same time Denmark in a similar manner was being brought under one head by Gorm the Old, another great pagan king. He was more than a pagan king; he largely owed his success to being the king of Lejre in the island of Sjoelland,[2] the sacred spot where the yearly sacrifices to Odin took place. The king of Lejre was by virtue of his office chief high priest of Odin presiding at the sacrifices. As men assembled from all parts of the north to the fair which accompanied Odin's feast, and brought offerings of every description and value to the shrine, the king of Lejre became wealthy. By his wealth as much as by his arms, like Canute after him, he made himself master of all Denmark and of the southern parts of Norway and Sweden.

Gorm, however, had not too much time on his hands for Viking raids to Britain; troubles north and south, as well as the subjection of the discontented at home, kept him busy. Norway and Denmark had no good-will to each other in this process of consolidation, each pushing his borders forward at the expense of his neighbour; and Gorm's relations with Germany were difficult. The Germans pressed upon Schleswig and Jutland, repaying by raiding the borderland the ravages of the coasts by the Danes. King Arnulf of Germany had made a tremendous slaughter of the Northmen in 891 at Louvain as they returned from France, some of their greatest leaders being left on the field. Later still, at

[1] "When he was weary of the peacelessness of those who harried in Norway in summer. He fared west, too, as far as Man, and laid waste the tilths of Man."

[2] Zealand.

the beginning of the tenth century, Henry the Fowler, after due notice to Gorm that he must give decent treatment to the Christians in Denmark, made such an armed demonstration as produced the required effect, Gorm allowing his son Harold, afterwards king of Denmark as Harold Bluetooth, to be signed with the Cross.

As a defence against the raids of the German neighbours,

Map XVII

Emery Walker sc.

DENMARK AND NORWAY

Queen Thyra,[1] who ruled for Gorm in his frequent absence as a Viking, called out the men of Denmark and built a wall called the Dannevirke, with towers at intervals across the isthmus, from Schleswig to the sea.

In 936 Gorm was succeeded by his son Harold Bluetooth, who reigned until 985. Harold was a Christian in theory,

[1] Thyra is said by some authorities to have been a daughter of Ethelred I of Wessex.

and confined his plundering to the shores of the Baltic. But his Christianity sat very lightly on him.

Harold Fairhair of Norway had several sons, but only two survived him, Eric Bloodaxe, the son who at twelve years of age was sent on an eight years' Viking cruise, and who was said to be responsible for the deaths of all the others, and Hakon, a very much younger boy, who was the son of a concubine, born in 919 not long before Harold's death. Athelstan, says the saga, had sent an embassy to Harold Fairhair with a present of a very beautiful sword. Harold received the sword, and had half drawn it, when the ambassador reminded him that he had now made himself Athelstan's man by accepting a sword from him. Harold Fairhair said nothing. But in the next year a rich embassy in return came from him to Athelstan, bringing a ship beautifully decorated and other presents. Conducted before Athelstan, who was seated on his throne holding a court, the ambassador placed on his knee a child, the infant Hakon, and reminded him that by taking it on his knee he had adopted it as his foster-child. He went on to say, to restrain any impatient action of Athelstan, that Hakon was not the only child of Harold Fairhair. Athelstan brought up the boy in his court, where he was instructed as a Christian.

When Harold Fairhair died, Eric Bloodaxe succeeded him. But Athelstan supplied Hakon Athelstan fostre with ships and men, and he went to Norway and drove out Eric and made himself master. As a Christian, and as Athelstan's foster-son, a relation closer even than that of a natural parent and child,[1] no Viking raids, while he lived, disturbed Athelstan's lands with his permission.

Hakon tried to put down paganism in Norway, and introduced bishops and missionaries from England. But his uncle Sigurd, who was his chief adviser, showed him that any measure of force in that direction would cost him his life, and that toleration was his only safety. As it was, the attempts he made cost him in the end both his life and his

[1] See below "Fosterage," p. 250.

crown. The sons of Eric Bloodaxe from Denmark, where they had fled on Eric's deposition, made many attempts on Norway with the assistance of Harold Bluetooth. But they were unsuccessful until 963,[1] when at the close of a battle in which Hakon, greatly by personal prowess, had grievously defeated them, he was struck as they fled away in their ships by a chance arrow and died. Like a true Christian, thinking to end this war of succession in Norway, he appointed with his last breath the sons of Eric as his successors.

But his good wishes were not fulfilled. Harold Greyfell, Eric's eldest son, killed Sigurd, the old uncle who had been Hakon's good adviser, and killed another earl, Trygvve, who was descended from another of Harold Fairhair's sons, Olaf Farman. Sigurd left a son Hakon jarl, who fled to Harold Bluetooth in Denmark; Trygvve left a wife with child, who when born was the famous Olaf Trygvasson. The material for civil war was handed down to a new generation, helping to keep the Northmen's hands off Britain by engendering internal trouble.

Harold Greyfell ruled Norway peaceably for some years, while Hakon jarl plotted against him in Denmark. Like his predecessor, he discouraged piracy, and turned his attention to the Baltic, where the Northmen were warring for commerce with the Svends and Slavs. His end came in 975. Gold Harold, a nephew of Harold Bluetooth of Denmark, was tempted by Hakon jarl to try for the throne of Norway. Harold Bluetooth, joining in the conspiracy, invited the Norwegian Harold Greyfell to come over to a conference. When he landed, Gold Harold fell on him and killed him. Hakon jarl then fell on Gold Harold and killed *him*, and then sailed to Norway and reigned over it as tributary to Harold Bluetooth in Denmark. This Hakon jarl was a pagan and as such a Viking. But in the disturbed state of Norway he could not at first do much to molest Britain, spending his energy in making himself free of any dependency on Denmark and carrying his raids into the Baltic Sea.

[1] Or 961. All dates in the sagas, chronicles, and annals are uncertain, but in most instances nothing hangs on their accuracy.

Nor did the king of Denmark make any Viking outbreaks in his later years. About the time of the death of Harold Greyfell, Otho I of Germany had invaded Denmark on behalf of the Christian bishops, whom Harold Bluetooth was taxing and plundering, burnt Thyra's Dannevirke, and forced Harold to submit to Christianity.

His son Sweyn, however, remained a pagan and a Viking. He allied himself with a famous band of pirates at Jomsburg, at the mouth of the Oder, a very powerful organisation of restless characters, who opposed any settled government and the Christianity which was coincident with it, and lived wholly by plunder. In such company Sweyn fought his father on occasion. In one of these engagements, in 935, Harold Bluetooth fell (it is said by Sweyn's hand) and Sweyn became king. He was a Viking of the most pronounced kind, and it is related in the saga that at his father's funeral feast, drinking the healths which formed part of the funeral ceremony, he pledged an oath that he would conquer England.

With this pagan revival, with pagan kings on the thrones of both Norway and Denmark, and with the Jomsburg pirates at the height of their glory, affairs were ready for another attack on Britain in force. This came in the time of Ethelred II.

Astrid, Trygvve's widow, wandered for months with her unborn babe through the forests and over the mountains of Norway into Sweden and Russia, to escape Harold Greyfell's enmity. During her wanderings Olaf Trygvasson was born. Though she escaped for the time, ill-luck attended her and her child. While he was quite a little boy they were seized in Russia and sold into slavery to different owners, and never saw one another again until Olaf became king of Norway. Olaf with another boy was sold by the purchaser for a "right good he-goat," and resold for "a very good cloak." He had, however, the good fortune to fall at last into the hands of an uncle, who was a prominent merchant in Novgorod. Here Olaf lived for nine years, and might have gone on living if he had not one day recognised among

the traders at the gates a man against whom he had a grudge. He felled the man in the usual style with his axe. But it was Novgorod and not Norway, and Olaf was taken before a judge charged with murder. Then the uncle stepped in and disclosed Olaf's parentage to the king, who arranged for the "eric" or death-fine and took the promising young man into favour. But Olaf did not stay in Novgorod. Possibly the taste of blood had revived his Viking instincts. He fell out with the king, and left for a life of plundering cruises.

Sometime towards the end of the tenth century, while cruising round Britain, he married Gyda, the sister of Olaf Cuaran, the famous Norse king of Dublin. Gyda had been married to an English earl, whose estates she held, and she was living in England. Olaf took her to Ireland, where as a man well known in the Viking world he would be acceptable, and lived with her, "sometimes in England, sometimes in Ireland."[1]

In his cruises Olaf went south, and, stopping at the Scilly Islands, came in contact with a hermit, who preached to him Christianity. He may have heard of it from Gyda, as she had lived in England. But he did not cease the less to be a Viking. He sailed on round the south coast and joined Sweyn of Denmark in his fierce attack on London.[2] The raid resulted in Olaf being detached from Sweyn and baptized at Andover, Ethelred II standing as his godfather. Olaf then gave up the Viking life, and set out to conquer Norway from Hakon jarl. On his way he stopped at the Orkneys, and offered Sigurd the Stout the choice of death or baptism; Sigurd was baptized and became his man, which held until Olaf's death in 1000. Arrived in Norway Olaf defeated and killed Hakon, and at once set to work with all the enthusiasm of a convert to force the new faith on his people.

His success was slow and he earned much ill-will by his energy. He fell out with his neighbours in Sweden, and he

[1] *Olaf Trygvasson Saga*, chap. 33.
[2] *Infra*, Chap. XIV.

had to encounter the full force of Sweyn's hatred, who, always cruising and fighting with an eye on Norway, lost no opportunity of stirring up Olaf's neighbours and countrymen against him.

At length, in 1000, after some three years of fencing and fighting, Olaf was defeated by the very superior navy of Sweyn and his confederates at Svold on the coast of Pomerania. When he saw that the battle was irretrievably lost, he jumped overboard in his full armour and sank.

Norway was then put in commission, being partitioned between Olaf the first Christian king of Sweden, the sons of Hakon jarl, and Sweyn, who was now able to turn his whole attention to Wessex.

Norway fell into a condition of anarchy under its three sets of rulers and its insubordinate chiefs, until Olaf, afterwards called the Saint, to whom three churches of St. Olave in London are dedicated, came to Norway and captured the kingdom. This Olaf was the son of Harold Groenski, descended from Harold Fairhair through a son Olaf Farman, who was killed by Eric Bloodaxe.

Olaf stayed with Ethelred II until 1015, taking a very prominent part in the struggle between Ethelred and the invaders. In 1015 he took advantage of Sweyn's death and Canute's entanglements in Wessex, to go to Norway and make himself master. He set to work like Hakon Athelstan fostre and Olaf Trygvasson, to force Christianity on the people by the same harsh and cruel methods of conversion and with the same result. Canute now seated on the throne of England used both force and money to undermine his rule, as his father Sweyn had done with Olaf Trygvasson, and in the end he was successful. He stirred up rebellion to such good purpose that, in 1030, Olaf fell in a battle with his own people, who were assisted by Canute, and Canute then annexed Norway to Denmark, sending his young son Sweyn to govern it in his name. After Olaf's death, however, there was a reaction in his favour, and a few years later Sweyn was driven out for Magnus the Good, Olaf's son.

On Canute's death in 1035 Hardicanute, Emma's son, became king of Denmark, and Harold Harefoot, the son of Canute by an Englishwoman, the king of England. On Harold's death in 1039 Hardicanute came to England. But he made a compact with Magnus that the one who survived should inherit both Norway and Denmark. In 1042 Hardicanute died, and Magnus came to Denmark and reigned until 1047. The result was peace to Britain in the greater part of the reign of Edward the Confessor. On his death, Sweyn, Canute's nephew, took Denmark, and Harold Hardrada, the half-brother of Olaf the Saint, became king of Norway.[1]

Paganism had now ceased to be an active principle, and as a consequence Viking raids were discouraged and gradually came to an end.

In the kings of Norway who were pioneers for Christianity, Hakon Athelstan fostre, Olaf Trygvasson, Olaf the Saint, we see the counterparts of Edwin, Oswald, and Ethelbert, who lost their kingdoms or their lives in trying to bring settled order to South Britain. In each case there were several failures before final success came.

[1] See Chap. XIX.

CHAPTER IX

THE SETTLEMENTS OF THE NORTHMEN

Alfred was succeeded, luckily for Wessex, by four strong men of mature age in succession; his son Edward the Elder (901–925), Edward's sons, Athelstan (925–940), Edmund (940–946), and Edred (946–955).

Under these rulers Alfred's desperate defence of Wessex was turned into a continued advance on the new Scandinavian settlements in the north and east. Not only were the borders of Wessex itself strengthened by the fortification of the frontier posts, by digging trenches and erecting palisades and castles, but each of the four kings steadily encroached, though not without some reverses, on the power and possessions of their Scandinavian under-kings, striving to turn the nominal rule which they had had formerly over the territory north of Wessex into a real control both for offence and defence under its primacy.

In alliance with his sister Ethelfleda, called the Lady of the Mercians, a most able daughter of the great Alfred, who had married and survived Ethelred the ruler of Mercia, Edward the Elder advanced his power at the expense of the independence of the Northmen in Central England. He fortified and repaired the walls of London and controlled the approaches to it by sea by driving the Northmen from the north bank of the Thames in Essex. In 906 he made a fresh treaty with Guthrum II of East Anglia; after this he encroached steadily on Guthrum's territory, building forts at Hertford and Maldon, and between 917–919 he subdued East Anglia and killed Guthrum, and Ethelfleda won one after another their five burghs in the valley of the Trent.

In 924 there is an entry in the chronicles which has

given some trouble to the national vanity of Scotland: "This year Edward was chosen for father and for lord by the kings of Scots and by the Scots, and by King Regnold[1] (the Norse ruler of the North Humbrians) and by the North Humbrians, and also by the king of the Strathclyde Britons and by all the Strathclyde Britons." The only comment necessary is that, when a powerful neighbour was seen to be coming with a big army, and a view to mischief (especially in the presence of mutual foreign foes), it was not unusual to promise to be his man, which promise held good as long as there was any danger of his staying to the country's hurt, or until the mutual alliance against a third party, which generally formed the basis of the relations of overlord and sub-king, was rendered unnecessary by the departure of the common enemy, who was, in this case, evidently the Northman of the West.[2]

The general advance was continued by Athelstan, whose reign figures in the chronicles as a time of brilliant military successes. In the west he drove the Welsh, who might always be counted on to join the Scandinavian or any other invader against the Saxon, back to the line of the Wye in Wales and the Tamar in Cornwall, gaining some control of these rivers in case of naval attack, and clearing the Welsh away from Chester, and he invaded the north both by sea and land, expelling the Scandinavian rulers of lower North Humbria to annex it to Wessex under his own nominees.

It would not appear that in this respect his success was very real, in spite of the grandeur of phraseology of the chronicle. One Scandinavian ruler was replaced by another, sometimes an Irish king of Dublin, Waterford, or Limerick, an Ivar, Regnald, or Olaf, sometimes the "tanist" of a Scandinavian king, such as Eric. These names pass backward and forward over the stage, leaving little appearance of reality,

[1] Ingnald, Regnwald, Reignold, Ronald, Ranald, Reginald, &c.

[2] Under date 1031 the Saxon Chronicle records that Canute went to Scotland and that "the king of the Scots, Malcolm, submitted to him and became his man, but that he held only a little while," *i.e.* so long as it suited Malcolm.

except to point to North Humbria having become entirely too Norse to be ruled by any but Scandinavian leaders, and too fickle, or perhaps too awkwardly placed geographically, to hold for long to any of them.

In the end Athelstan had to meet a very extensive combination against him of Scots and Welsh, and the Scandinavians of Ireland, Cumbria, North Humbria, and the Isles.

In the south he guarded against attack by making alliances with the rulers of France, marrying one sister to Charles the Simple, the nominal French king at Laon, and another to Charles's great feudal tenant Hugh Capet, the ancestor of a long line of French kings, who, with Athelstan, held in check the newly settled province of Normandy.

For the coast of France was no longer in the friendly hands of the French king. Rollo had never let go his hold on Rouen, which he occupied when he went up in 885 to besiege Paris; and the king of France, in 911, finding it hopeless to dislodge him, followed the example of Alfred with Guthrum, and gave up to Rollo and his Northmen the territory of which they were already in possession, settling them in a position to control the mouth of the Seine in the district now called Normandy.

These Northmen adopted the French language and French habits, and became Christians and devoted sons of Rome. Henceforth the kingdom of France was protected from attack on that side, as was Wessex on the east by the settlement of East Anglia.

But this settlement of Normandy by Northmen was an additional menace to Wessex; its existence shifted the centre of attack, making the coast of Wessex more vulnerable, as it gave to ships which had raided the south coast convenient ports for storing their booty, and for good winter quarters, in place of beating up the Channel to Flanders, or sailing through dangerous seas to Anglesea or Waterford. From this time Normandy, like Flanders, becomes a neutral recruiting ground and base for refitting, in expeditions against Wessex, until the day when a joint expedition from the two countries conquered England under William I.

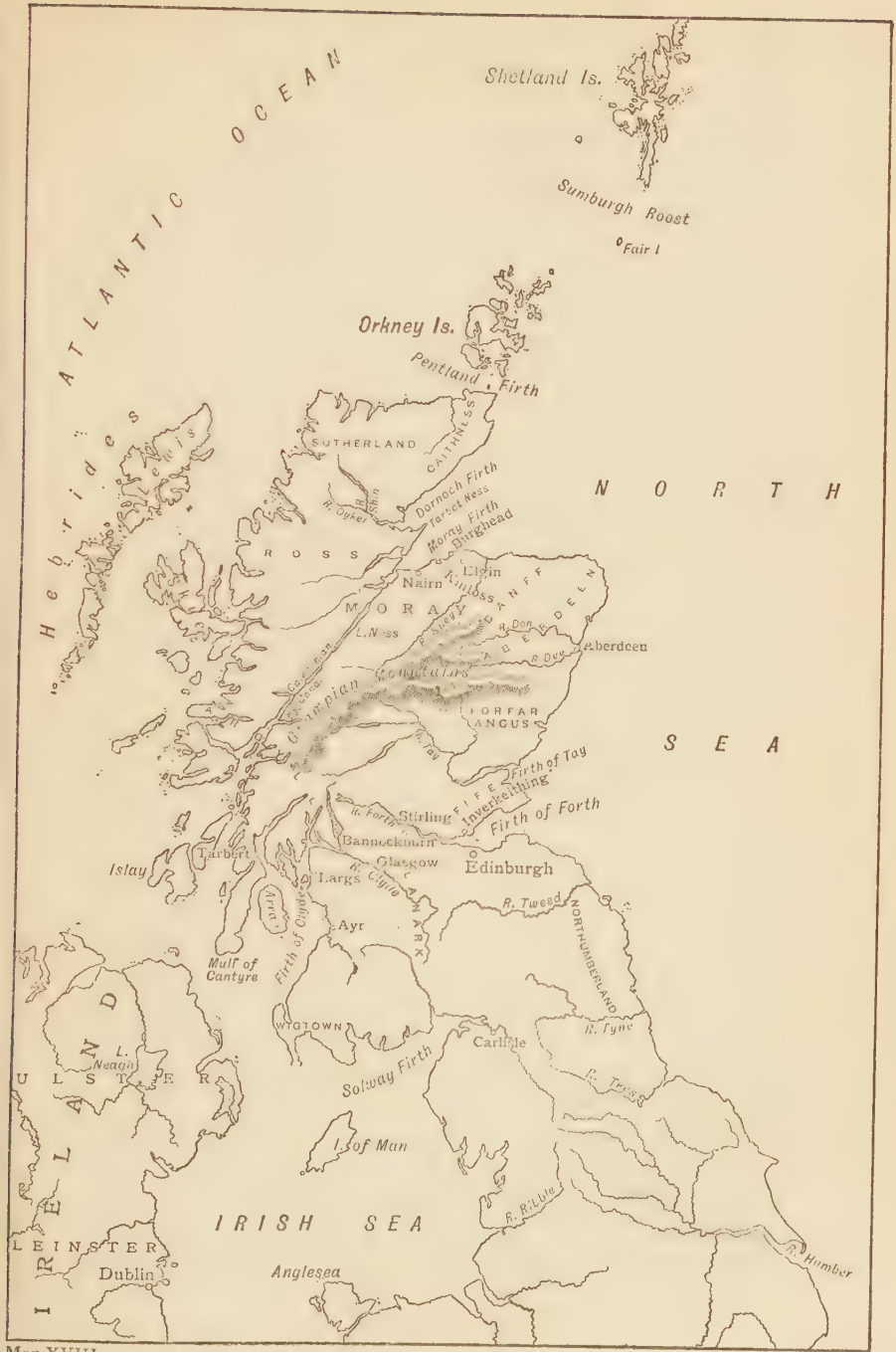
But although the ports of Normandy might be troublesome, as places in which an expedition might collect or refit, it was not in the south that the coming danger lay, either to Wessex or to the rest of Britain.

Throughout the tenth century, from the days of Alfred to the accession of Ethelred II, in spite of Athelstan's apparently brilliant advance and his continental alliances, the situation as regards the Northmen steadily changed for the worse.

When Alfred with the militia of Wessex had fought his despairing defence in the south-west, the stream of immigration from the Baltic which afterwards overwhelmed Ethelred II was only just in motion. But before Alfred's death, besides the settlement by the Northmen of one half of England, the Norse emigration forced by Harold Fairhair had commenced to the Orkneys and to the west of the Scottish coast. Harold Fairhair gave the Orkneys to Rognwald, earl of Moeri, Rollo's father, and Rognwald gave them to Sigurd, his brother. Sigurd "joined his fellowship with Thorstein the Red, the son of Olaf the White and Aude the very wealthy. They won all Caithness, and much else of Scotland, Moray, and Ross." Sigurd was eventually succeeded by Rognwald's son Einar, called Torf Einar, because, as they were ill-off for wood in the isles, he taught them how to cut turf out of the earth for firewood.

In the interval between the death of Alfred and Ethelred's accession, those who had emigrated after Hafnersfiord built up a powerful naval state on the west of Scotland and in the Irish Sea; they soon extended their rule as far as Dornoch Firth and the Oikel; Man, the Orkneys, and the Irish ports of Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick being the centres of their power.

From the Shetlands and the Orkneys the Northmen gradually seized on and settled the Hebrides, Skye, and all the other isles of the western coast of Scotland. These southern isles with the mainland adjoining were called the Sudreys or Sudreyjar (Sodor); when they became Christian their bishop, the bishop of Sodor and Man, was subject for



Map XVIII

Emery Walker sc.

THE NORSE COLONIAL EMPIRE

a long time to the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of Trondheim in Norway.

The Isle of Man, which was early settled, became the heart of Scandinavian intrigue. The kings of Man were closely connected with, and often identical with, the kings of Dublin and the kings of North Humbria; though later they became tributary to Norway, the yoke sat on them very lightly; they were practically independent.

Man was a splendid base for operations on any part of the larger islands, a point from which the Northmen of the Orkneys and Ireland could join hands, through the Northmen and Britons of Cumbria, with their brethren in York and Lincoln, or with invading navies from Scandinavia. The hope of such a union is possibly the explanation of Hasting's several marches from Exeter to Chester; the fear of it explains Edmund's raid on Cumbria in 945, and Ethelred's raid with his fleet ravaging Man in 1000, as also the wintering of Ethelred and his Witan in Shropshire in 1007, from which he could watch the coast of Cumbria and the Severn, and keep an eye on the fickle earl of Mercia.

It will be seen then that the task which the descendants of Alfred, from Edward the Elder to Ethelred II, had to meet was of a very different character to that which confronted Alfred himself. The Northmen are in settled possession, a possession becoming more solid and settled every year, of all England north of Wessex and the Thames, of Man, of the east and south coast of Ireland, of all the western islands of Scotland, with the consequent control of all the western mainland from the Orkneys to Anglesea.

The problem which faced Alfred, the "pagan army," the few shiploads of pirates or traders, who in his time nearly conquered Wessex, had become a negligible quantity by the time of Ethelred II.

Though their raids on the coast might yet form the staple of news for the monk in the monastery of Peterborough or Worcester, who apart from his local news knew nothing of what was going on in the world outside, the real danger which Athelstan and Ethelred II had to meet lay in

the possibility of an alliance between these wandering tramps of the sea and the powerful settlements of Northmen in the north and west of the islands. It is to the north and north-west that the kings of Wessex must look to repel or anticipate by attack an invasion which always hangs over them.

If the tribes and families which controlled this great naval republic could have refrained from quarrelling among themselves, and could have been content to submit to any one leader, the conquest of all Britain would have been effected long before William of Normandy made his little expedition.

But the empire of the Orkneys was always in a state of turbulent war. There was never at any one time an acknowledged head of the confederation who could count on a following for a sufficiently long time to accomplish conquest. The authority of a war leader generally lasted only for the campaign for which he was nominated, and one great defeat such as Brunanburg, or Clontarf, or Dunkeld, sufficed to keep the whole confederation quiet for a generation. But although they could not combine among themselves to form a solid and permanent state, they supplied a ready body of mercenaries to assist in any fight which might be going on in any part of the islands. Any Scandinavian expeditions which attacked any part of Britain recruited first in the west.[1]

The task of the Wessex kings in the north was by no means an easy one. The chiefs who had been expelled by Athelstan from North Humbria called in the assistance of

[1] When Hakon drives out Eric Bloodaxe (see Chap. VIII., "Scandinavia, 800–1035"), the latter goes to the Orkneys and from thence to England, whence he ravages in Scotland and the north. Athelstan gives him Northumberland on condition of his being baptized. "As he had little land," he spent his summers in Viking raids in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, and the Hebrides. Edmund on Athelstan's death threw him out.

Speaking of the battle of Brunanburg or Brumby, under date 931, the *Annals of Clonmacnoise* say: "The Danes of Dublin and the north part of Ireland went to it."

Athelstan used Norse mercenaries in his expeditions against the north. "The brothers Thorolf and Egil were going southward past Saxland and Flæmingaland, when they heard that the king of England needed men, and as there was likelihood of getting much property, they decided to go thither with their men." They went accordingly, and "they made an agreement and became his men." (*Egil's Saga*, which gives a very full account of the Campaign of Brunanburg, c. 51, 56.)

the king of Alban (or king of the Scots). As the king of the Scots became more powerful and better able to take care of himself, he was the less willing to admit the supremacy of distant Wessex, finding his interest better served by alliances with his closer neighbours, the Norwegians of the Orkneys, Man and Dublin, and the Britons of Strathclyde.

In 908 Donald, the brother of the Scots king, became king of the Strathclyde Britons, the prelude to the connection with Scotland of the land on the west, north of Solway Firth. Constantine II, the Scots king, flirted with both sides. At first he allied himself with Wessex, helping in 918 to drive back the Northmen from Waterford under Regnold O'Ivar, who was trying to establish himself in North Humbria; but this alliance was only temporary, the balance shifting as the Northmen from the west and north, or the Englishmen from the south, pressed too close to his borders.

Afterwards he changed sides, threw in his lot with the Northmen, and bound the alliance by giving his daughter to Olaf Cuaran (Olaf of the Sandals), the then king of Dublin and earl of North Humbria.

Athelstan, to coerce him, invaded Scotland with an army and fleet. Constantine, in return, went to the assistance of Olaf in North Humbria, and formed with him a league of Irish and North Humbrian Northmen, Strathclyde Britons, Picts, and Scots, which met with final and decisive defeat at a place north of the Humber, called by the chronicler Brunanburg, at the hands of Athelstan and his son Edmund, the son of Constantine falling among a great slaughter of kings and earls.[1]

Edmund and Edred continued Athelstan's conflict in the north, replacing one Scandinavian ruler with another, and playing the Norwegians and Danes against each other, as either promised to be more acceptable to the North Humbrians, and more obedient to Wessex. On Edmund's

[1] The only mention of Dublin in the Saxon Chronicle is the entry that the Northmen fled back to Dublin after the battle.

accession in 940, the North Humbrians called in Olaf Guthfrithsson from Dublin. He died in 941.

In 943[1] Edmund had to meet an invasion of North Humbria by Olaf Cuaran, of Dublin, and Regnold, of Waterford. Through the interposition of the two Scandinavian archbishops, Wulfstan of York, who clearly sided with the Northmen, and Odo of Canterbury, an agreement was effected, giving Olaf all north of Watling Street.[2] After this peace Olaf was baptized, Edmund standing godfather; and Regnold, who had been baptized, was confirmed. But in the next year Edmund had sufficient strength to drive them both out, and put in his own nominees.

After Edred came to the throne the Northmen of North Humbria, in 948, again asserted their independence, first under Olaf Cuaran, and then under Eric, son of Harold Bluetooth, of Denmark.[3] In 954 Edred again succeeded in being acknowledged as overlord.

In the end the nominal supremacy of Wessex seems to have been acknowledged, but North Humbria gradually became independent under Scandinavian earls from Dublin and Waterford, and formed a centre of disaffection in case of an invasion from Ireland through Cumbria. To check this, Edmund in 945 had made a great raid on the Cumbrian territory (as did his descendant, Ethelred II, fifty years later), and offered this district and Galloway to Malcolm, the then king of Alban, as the price of assistance against the Northmen. This must have been a very difficult alliance for the Scot to keep, as Malcolm was surrounded by the Northmen on all sides, and Wessex was too far off to be of any assistance in case of sudden attack.

The policy of the Wessex kings seems to have resembled that of the later British Empire in its dealings with outlying powers, in their establishment of these buffer states. Galloway and Strathclyde in the hands of a friendly king of Scots would break the force of any incursion on the

[1] 943, A. S. Chron.; 939, Simeon Dun.
[2] Simeon Dun.
[3] Or, query, Eric Bloodaxe.

borders of the dependencies of Wessex: as in the case of the latter-day empire, such cessions and boundaries called for frequent revision, and were the cause of further advance and of complications unseen at the time. But they were then, no doubt, and are still, the easiest way of avoiding difficulty for the time, where a settled central government comes in contact with tribal organisations which it does not want to absorb, but which, from the ceaseless ebb and flow of disorder, form a menace to its own security. The kings of Wessex had already too many Northmen under their nominal rule to wish to give them the opportunity of building frontier states. If the Scots king could keep Galloway and Cumbria in order they would be quiet. If he could not, they would fight him instead of fighting Wessex. If Wessex fell out with the Scots, Wessex could always bribe the western chiefs to attack them in the flank.

The Scottish king on his own account fought the Northmen freely. In 960 they invaded the east coast, trying the Forth, then the Tay, and then coasting along the shores north. They landed, were met and defeated at the mouth of the river Cullen in Banff. Somewhere about 980 their fleets entered the Esk; they landed and plundered Angus and Forfar to the Firth of Tay, and besieged Perth. The Scots king, Kenneth III (who had been one of the confederates with Edgar at Chester in 973), attacked them on the plains of Loncarty, near Perth, and after a hard fight routed them and made them take to their ships. The Scottish story, which is dependent a good deal on tradition, is that Sweyn afterwards sent more men (which is unlikely) who were defeated at St. Bride in Angus and that later still he sent Canute. Malcolm II avoided a battle, trying to weary out the Northmen by skirmishes. In the end there was a drawn battle followed by a treaty. The Northmen were certainly active all over the islands in these years.

Wales was passively hostile. But the Welsh were generally too intent on their internal feuds to combine against either Wessex or the Northmen.

Roderick paid a distant tribute of respect, if not actual money tribute, to the Wessex kings.

The wars of Ireland, whose great monastic civilisation was fast vanishing before the raiders, are of sufficient interest and unity to be treated of separately.

CHAPTER X

THE DEFENCE OF IRELAND (901–1000).—MALACHI AND BRIAN BORU

Ireland, a country intersected to its very centre by long rivers navigable for their light ships, and connected by a chain of convenient lakes, was an ideal ground for the Norse traders and pirates who lived on shipboard. They made good use of their opportunities, using the long rivers, as they had done those of the east coast of England both as roads and as boundary lines.

After what the Irish Annalists call the forty years' rest, the cessation of invasion from without from the last quarter of the ninth century to about 916 (the disorders within continuing in full swing) a renewed invasion of Ireland was made in force, and Kildare was attacked by Sitric, and Waterford by Regnold, both of them grandsons of the Ivar who became king of North Humbria and of Dublin in the middle of the ninth century.

From Ireland Regnold and others crossed to Scotland and entered North Humbria, where they were met and severely defeated by Constantine of Scotland and the North Humbrians at a battle at Tynemoor or Corbridge on Tyne (918).[1]

Then in 919 Niall Glunduff, the king of Ulster, who had become overlord or Ardri of Ireland made a levy of the men of Meath and Ulster, and met the Northmen, who had brought a big fleet to Dublin, at Kilmashogue on the mountains about six miles south of Dublin.

The event shows the great danger in every part of the

[1] This Regnold became ruler of North Humbria after the death of Ethelfleda in 919. His son Sitric O'Ivar married Athelstan's sister in 925.

islands of risking a pitched battle with these well-armed heathens. Niall Glunduff was killed, and with him fell twelve of the Irish sub-kings, and a number of chieftains, the names given showing that the levy of the Ardri was confined to the local forces of Meath and Ulster.

The Northmen then plundered Armagh. But they did not escape wholly without punishment. Donogh, the grandson of Malachi I, who followed Niall as Ardri, inflicted upon them, in the year after Kilmashogue, as severe a beating in Meath as had been suffered by the Irish in that battle. But the "great sea-cast floods of foreigners" continued to be "vomited up" upon the coasts. Reinforced by fresh fleets, the Northmen sailed up the Shannon to Lough Derg and Lough Ree, and plundered unmolested the numerous religious houses.

From this time until 979 (the date of the accession of Ethelred II to the throne of Wessex), when Malachi II thoroughly beat them at Tara, bodies of the Northmen, with varying fortunes, plundered and traded, and waged incessant war with the Irish, both north and south.

The problem was the same as that which affected Wessex, and the result promised to be the same. The Irish kings were unable to meet them at sea. They were ignorant of their point of attack, and when they knew it they could not keep the tribal levies in the field for any prolonged action. Except on an exceptionally great occasion, each tribe or kingdom had to content itself with casual efforts of defence. As a consequence the Northmen settled, fortified, and formed kingdoms in their trading towns along the coast, Dublin, Waterford and Limerick, from which they controlled the neighbouring country. In any case, the struggle of the native Irish against them, as against Henry II afterwards, was only a half-hearted one. Where there was no settled order, where the strong hand of the overlord was not felt, or where a very weak tribe felt itself in daily danger of conquest from a stronger one, the common folk welcomed passively the tyranny of the stranger who gave them peace, especially when they saw, as they often did, their own

chieftains allying themselves with the pagan against one another.[1]

The settlements of the Northmen were especially successful on the south-west coast. Entering through the estuary of the Shannon into the very heart of Ireland, like Turgesius in the preceding century, they established themselves thoroughly in Munster about 930, and governed the whole country under a military organisation. "There was a king from them," say the Annals with patent exaggeration, "over every territory, and a chief over every chieftaincy, and an abbot over every church,[2] and a steward over every village, and a soldier in every house, so that none of the men of Erinn had power to give even the milk of his cow, nor so much as the clutch of eggs of one hen in succour or kindness to an aged man or to a friend, but was forced to preserve them for the foreign steward or bailiff or soldier."

Munster acknowledged two kings, Mahon and Molloy, the rulers of the tribes of the Dalcassians and of Desmond, of North and South Munster, respectively.

The excellence of the weapons and armour of the Northmen and their discipline made them so much an overmatch for the linen-smocked Irish, that Mahon, the king of North Munster, whose following was the tribe of the Dalcassians, abandoned his territory and retreated with his people across the Shannon into the mountains of Clare, from which he carried on a fitful warfare against the Northmen.

But he and his following tired of a war of starvation which brought no end; he came in and made with the Northmen a humiliating peace, which acknowledged their superiority; to this his younger brother Brian, the celebrated Brian Boru, refused to agree. Brian retired to the woods with a very small following, and, like Alfred at Athelney when all was apparently lost, lived an outlaw's life rather than submit, cutting off the Northmen's foraging parties on

[1] In 973 Donogh, the son of Congalach who had been killed by the Northmen, allied himself with Olaf and the Northmen of Dublin, to defeat the Ardri, Domnall O'Neill the son of Murketagh.

[2] Which looks very much as if they had become Christian.

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opportunity, living on wild herbs or the produce of the hunt, and suffering all the hardships of want and exposure.

When this had been going on for some time, King Mahon went to visit Brian, who had hardly any followers left to him, in order to try and persuade him to give up a hopeless struggle. Brian in reply made such an eloquent appeal to his brother to make one last effort to expel the invader, that Mahon agreed to consult the leaders of his tribe, the Dalcassians, as to what should be done.[1] The tribe decided for war, and Mahon called his people together for the attack, sending for men of the tribe of the Dalcassians from all parts of Ireland. Outside of his tribe he had no assistance except a small detachment under a chief closely allied to them in blood—the king of Delvin More ("the king soldier and champion of Erinn").

Mahon rallied his men at Cashel in Tipperary, from which the Dalcassians marched against the Northmen.

The Northmen in their turn had collected their forces in strength; Molloy, the king of South Munster, and O'Donovan, the king of the tribe of the Hy Carbery in Munster, joined them against their own countrymen.

It is these divisions resulting from the tribal formation which acknowledged no nation and no motherland beyond the territory of the tribe, which makes all this Scandinavian story such a despairing matter for the historian. For the tribal formation which brought such difficulties to the British was equally dangerous to the Scandinavian.

It meant that before all important engagements the leader had to consult every petty chieftain on matters of war. Such a system not only led to hazardous delays in the face of the enemy, but gave full play to the jealousies of the chiefs, who could withdraw or join the enemy if their advice was refused, or if they were not satisfied with the positions assigned to their tribes. It was not necessary that the sulky chief should be actively hostile. He need only stand by inactive and join the winning side.

[1] *The Wars of the Gaedhill and the Gaill* give an eloquent dialogue in verse, and an equally elegant dialogue in prose between Brian and Mahon, after the fashion of Tacitus and William of Malmesbury.

This jealousy of Wessex by Mercia is quite sufficient to account for the indecisions and repeated changes of face in Ethelred's reign. Scottish history is marked terribly with tribal quarrels from the battle of the Standard in 1138 to the military operations of the Stuarts in 1715 and 1745. Modern politics are paralysed by the same cause, it being safer to undermine the Parliamentary majority than to risk an open battle.

The armies met in 968 at Sulcoit or Sullohod, near Limerick Junction, about twenty miles from Limerick. After a battle which raged all day in a series of single-handed combats, the Northmen broke and fled to Limerick, followed by the Irish, the flight and pursuit lasting all night, and both parties entering the city pell-mell in the dawn of the morning. Here the Irish revenged their subjection mercilessly. The Northmen were slaughtered, and the city burnt and plundered, the booty including numbers of "soft youthful bright girls," "blooming silk-clad women," and "active well-formed boys."

The Northmen merely moved their base of operations for a time, making Scattery Island and the other islands of the Shannon their quarters and fortresses of defence for their women and plunder. But Mahon and Brian did not rest on their victory. Collecting boats, they followed up the victory of Sulcoit with vigorous attacks on the Northmen's positions on the islands, breaking up their stations for recruiting and their magazines, and defeating them and their allies in many engagements. They drove Ivar, the Norse leader, over to Anglesea, and forced Donovan and Molloy to acknowledge Mahon's authority. Mahon took hostages from them and from other chiefs of Munster, and reigned over the country for six years.

Donovan and Molloy were not content to be subordinate to Mahon. In 976, by a very gross and characteristic act of treachery, they murdered him, only to find that in his successor, Brian Boru, they had raised up a more implacable and more active enemy.

Brian landed in Scattery, killed the Northmen there,

TABLE OF THE ARDRIS OR OVERKINGS OF IRELAND.

N. *is Northern Hy Neill of Ulster.*
S. *is Southern Hy Neill of Meath.*

Niall of the Nine Hostages. *Circa* 379, invaded Britain and was defeated by Stilicho. From this time to Malachi II the Ardris were chosen generally either from the Northern or Southern Hy Neill.

S. 846, Malachi I.
N. 863, Aed Finnlaith.
S. 879, Flann Sinna.
N. 916, Niall Glunduff.
S. 919, Donogh.
S. 944, Congalach. Murketagh of the Leather Cloaks, of the Ulster branch, the right successor, is killed before Donogh's death.
N. 956, Domnall O'Neill, son of Murketagh of the Leather Cloaks.
S. 980, Malachi II.
Munster. 1002, Brian Boru.
S. 1014, Malachi II.

After him Ardris "with opposition," until in the time of the Ardri Roderick O'Conor of Connaught, Henry II invades Ireland.

and cleared out the other islands of the Shannon. He followed this by a campaign against Donovan, whom he killed, and he then turned to deal with Molloy, who in the ordinary course of things would have been king of Munster after Mahon's death. Brian, in Homeric style, sent him a formal challenge for the kingship, marched against and defeated him and his Norse allies, killed Molloy, and made himself king of both North and South Munster.

Meanwhile the kings of Ireland in Ulster and Meath had not been idle. The differences between this part and the rest of Ireland do not result, as English politicians think, from the events of the Reformation and the Civil War, but date back to the fourth century. At that time Niall of the Nine Hostages, a famous Irish chief who is said to have invaded England and Wales and to have been driven back by the Roman general Stilicho, established two branches of his family, called the Hy Neill or descendants of Neill, in Ulster and in Meath. Up to the time of Brian Boru it had become a fairly well-established usage that the overking or Ardri of Ireland should be chosen from these branches alternately, a king of Meath being succeeded as Ardri by a king of Ulster, who was succeeded by a king of Meath.

The Ardri's authority was acknowledged only so far as he was able to make it effectual, if he were lucky enough to escape being confronted with a pretender from the other branch of the family or from without. The eastern half of Ireland, most exposed as it was to the attacks of the Northmen, generally afforded sufficient scope for his energies without troubling himself much about the west. So the Ardri of Meath or Ulster fought the Northmen on the east without concerning themselves about the distresses or the successes of the kings of Munster.

On the death of Niall Glunduff in 919, Donogh, the king of Meath, became Ardri. He would have been succeeded in due course by the son of Niall Glunduff, Murketagh, king of Ulster, but for Murketagh's untimely death in a fight against the Northmen under Blacar, king of Dublin, in 943.

Murketagh carried on a constant war against the Northmen, cutting off their raiding expeditions and inflicting on them many defeats.

He is remarkable for a little glimpse which he gives us of the kingly life and of the conditions of warfare in those times.

It was usual for the Ardri or his successor to make from time to time a progress through Ireland, living on the country. It was in the nature of a challenge to any chief inclined to question the authority or succession. Murketagh in 941 made such a progress, to impress on the chieftains his right to the succession. To make it more impressive he set out in the dead of winter, and, to protect his followers from the cold,[1] provided them with long loose mantles of leather, from which he acquired the name of Murketagh of the Leather Cloaks.

It was not usual in those days to carry on winter campaigns. The greater part of the cattle would have been killed and salted and the corn reaped, so that the chance of repaying the expenses of the expedition were very small indeed.

Owing to Murketagh's death, Donogh was succeeded in 944 by Congalach, another king of Meath.

Congalach took Dublin twice, on the second occasion killing some 1500 Northmen, with their king Blacar. But in 956 he fell into an ambuscade prepared for him by Olaf, king of Dublin, in alliance with the Leinstermen, and was killed. His successor, Donogh of Ulster, the son of Murketagh, continued his father's war against the Northmen, and against the son of Congalach, who had changed sides and allied himself with them in the hope of becoming Ardri, until 980, when Donogh was succeeded by Malachi II, king of Meath.

This Malachi is one of the great characters of Irish history, and his reign marks an epoch in the Irish history of the Scandinavian wars. In 979, before his succession to the supreme dignity, he had defeated the Dublin Northmen

[1] See "Forests," p. 319.

in a decisive battle at Tara, the capital of Ireland. It was a battle dearly gained, weakening by his tremendous losses the power of Malachi against Brian.

But he did more than win a victory, however brilliant. He followed it up by a determined attack on Dublin, entered it after a siege of three days, taking great spoils, and releasing some 2000 prisoners, among whom was the king of Leinster. He exacted a fine of 2000 oxen from the Northmen, and forced them to free the Hy Neill from a tribute imposed upon them.[1] Olaf Cuaran, the king of Dublin, who had played a great part both here and in North Humbria, gave up his rule, possibly by compulsion, to his son Sitric, and retired to the monastery of Iona.

Brian, meanwhile, was establishing his authority both east and north in Leinster and Connaught. He soon came in conflict with Malachi, though it is not clear which was the aggressor. In 982, two years after Tara, Malachi roughly reminded Brian that he himself was Ardri and that Brian must not presume to spread his influence too far, by one of those acts of symbolism, only too like the spite of a quarrelsome boy, who wishes to show his strength and humble his playfellows, which, in that day impressed the imaginations of the grown-up children.

The Dalcassian kings had been crowned for long ages under an ancient tree. Malachi made a raid into Munster, tore up the tree by its roots, and destroyed it.[2]

From this time, in border skirmishes and retaliatory raids, began in seriousness the struggle between the two kings, which ended in the total wreck of the Irish monarchy.

Brian assembled a large "fleet," and went in command of 300 boats up the Shannon to Lough Ree. From this position he plundered Meath and Brefny. He appears in

[1] A similar case in 1029. Olaf, son of Sitric, king of the foreigners of Waterford, was taken prisoner by Mahon, king of Brefny, and ransomed on payment of 1200 cows, 120 Welsh horses, 60 oz. of gold, the sword of Carlus, 60 oz. of white silver, and the Irish hostages of Leinster and North Ireland.

[2] In like manner, and for a like reason, Philip Augustus in 1188 cuts down the elm near Gisors, under which the kings of France and dukes of Normandy had held conference.

this to have had the assistance of the Northmen of Waterford. Taking hostages from the different chiefs of Connaught and Leinster, he became master of all the south and west.

Malachi, while holding back Brian from the north and east, carried on a war for supremacy over the Northmen of Dublin. In this he won great successes; he forced the surrender of Dublin twice, in 989 and again in 996, when, among the loot of the city, he brought away two prizes greatly valued by the Northmen, the gold collar or bracelet of Tomar, and the sword of Carlus, relics of Norse princes who had fallen in battle in the ninth century.

But neither Malachi nor any Irish king ever seems to have attempted to hold either Dublin or any of the other ports occupied by the Northmen permanently, as Ethelred even in his darkest days held Bristol and London. What caused the contrast I cannot pretend to say, but the fact that the Northmen held in force a great trading-post must have made it very much easier for the Irish kings to deal with their disorder. They had something to hit at, in the place of pursuing a plundering party on land who could retire to their ships, or of trying to entice their ships into a bay where they could be surrounded and attacked.

At length Brian and Malachi met on the shores of Lough Ree and agreed to a division of Ireland, each holding what he had already got or could control, Malachi to be supreme in Meath, Ulster, and Connaught, and Brian in Munster and Leinster. This arrangement did not suit Mailmora, king of Leinster, as he was much more independent, more free to play off the Northmen against Malachi than he would be against Brian. So in 999 he joined the Northmen of Dublin against his overlord. Brian marched through Leinster to Dublin, and was joined by Malachi in Wicklow. Here, while they were encamped in the valley of Glenmama, near Dunlavin, the men of Leinster and the Northmen attempted to surprise them. The battle which followed was a real and a remarkably decisive one. Harold, son of Olaf Cuaran, was killed with some 4000 men, Mailmora was taken prisoner, and the Northmen, flying in a disorderly rout, left Dublin

open to the victors, who took and plundered both city and fortress, Brian remaining there a month before he returned to Munster. After this the Northmen resumed possession, but they were quiet in Ireland for some years. The spoil, the Annals say, included gold, silver, bronze, precious stones, carbuncle gems, buffalo horns, and beautiful goblets, and great numbers of captives.

As long as the tribe and the tribal territory was the unit of corporate life, it would seem to have been impossible for any one ruler, whether in Wessex or Ireland, even the shrewdest or most honourable, to keep for long successfully to the single course of asserting the supremacy of the native as a nation against the foreigner. Each, at times, used the Norse alliance against his nearer and more persistent enemy, the native king or chief, the smaller chiefs changing sides as their safety or their immediate interest led them. The men of Leinster especially were more often in alliance with the invader than with any of the Irish kings.

There was no idea at any time of a united Ireland as a nation; if the overlordship of Wessex had more of a tendency in the direction of national unity, such a result was due to the influence of the Benedictine monastery, under such men as Dunstan, which threw its weight on the side of the overlord. The Irish monastic system, bound up with the tribal land, was an influence against unity rather than for it. The military abbot or bishop was common in Ireland as in Scotland:[1] the see of Armagh was seized by a clan who held it for 200 years until the days of Malachi o Morgair in the middle of the twelfth century; the monks being driven out of the monasteries by the Northmen, the lands were absorbed by men of the clan who served the offices, and who took the revenues. The Norwegians in the coast cities, who, during the eleventh century, had become Christians, sent the bishops of their towns to Canterbury for consecration, making easier the English invasion of the twelfth century.

[1] Cormac M'Cullinan, archbishop of Cashel, and king of Munster, killed in battle in 903, is described in the Four Masters as a king, a bishop, an anchorite, a scribe, and profoundly learned in the Scotic tongue. He is said to have been the compiler of the Psalter of Cashel.

CHAPTER XI

THE FOUR MINORS OF WESSEX: EDWY (955–958), EDGAR (958–975), EDWARD THE MARTYR (975–978), ETHELRED II (978–1016)

I. The Benedictine Rule

On Edred's death, in 955, a double misfortune happened to Wessex. In the place of the four vigorous men who had succeeded Alfred, four minors, Edwy and Edgar, boy sons of Edmund, and Edward called the martyr and Ethelred II, boy sons of Edgar, became in succession kings of Wessex. And further, in a time when unity and a strong military administration were necessities for safety, the minors ruled in an atmosphere of religious difficulty which split up the confederated states into factions.

The evils of a minority were acknowledged in the irregular succession of the Wessex kings; brothers, as in the case of Alfred and Edred, being chosen in preference to the minor children of an elder brother. But the rule of the boy, if he were of a sufficient age to take the field (they were soldiers very early in those days), was not of necessity disastrous; it was the combination of monastic rule over a succession of four boys which created the supreme danger.

For all internal affairs the ecclesiastic was then, as he was for centuries afterwards, a most capable administrator and good man of business. But, secure in the immunity of his office, the ecclesiastic was not so careful either of his words or actions as a layman. Dunstan and Odo, for instance, did not hesitate to risk the plunging of the whole country into civil war by their language and behaviour at Edwy's coronation, for which they would have been called

to sharp account if they had been soldiers. Besides this source of irritation, the lay earls were only too ready when the kingdom fell into the hands of minors, to assert their independence of the king as against a monastic Prime Minister, becoming rivals of his authority, and sometimes dictators of his actions. The independence of the earldoms, though we have no direct contemporary knowledge of it, was a certain cause of disaster when the country, under a succession of boys, was faced with invasion.

But a worse misfortune in connection with these minorities was the division of the country over a difference of religious life and discipline, the contest between the married canons or priests and the celibate monks. It is very difficult to say how far these religious disputes had the importance assigned to them by the monastic chroniclers in these reigns; but that they did have considerable importance is shown by the place of King Edward the Martyr in the English Church calendar.

Political differences, though they may be a source of weakness in time of sudden danger, are not so very serious, because there is generally sufficient elasticity to admit of compromise. They are not fundamental principles which are at stake, but only division on the means of carrying out principles or of expressing them.

But religious disputes admit of no settlement by mutual concession, whether they are about the right keeping of Easter, or the position of the priest at the altar, or the relations of the clergy to the family, or the teaching of a catechism. So in time of national danger, men who would never let political opinion stand in the way of national safety will readily sacrifice their country to the enforcement of some special form of Church discipline or ritual.

That a reform was needed in the life of the clergy and the condition of the monasteries, there could be no question.

By the end of the ninth century a great change had come over the organisation of Christianity in these islands. The British monastic system which had, in spite of Rome,

impressed itself upon the religious life of the islands had played its part, and, like the later monastic life of the sixteenth century, had ceased to be a living influence, either for morality or for social safety. The monastic communities, which had, in the first instance, been schools for learning and devotional instruction, had become in time mere cities of refuge, where weary kings such as Cadwalla of Wessex, in 604, or Olaf Cuaran of Dublin, in 980, laid down the terrors of authority, or where whole families of both sexes might escape from the pressure of incessant war.

In the monastery they could obtain the cultured peace, which was impossible in the rough world without, and they could obtain it apart from many of the hardships which the first monks in their enthusiasm had willingly undergone. As rich men endowed monasteries with wealth and lands, often with a view to a retirement in their old age, the ambitious man began to look on the monastery not only as a pleasant place in which to live, but as a source of power and riches in the world.[1]

Bede, in a letter to Bishop Egbert of York, sadly describes (no doubt with a good deal of argument from particular to general) the decay into which religious life even in his time had fallen, and the dangers with which such decay threatened the nation. "There are numberless" (a good many) "places," he tells us, "which have the name of monasteries ascribed to them, but yet have nothing of the monastic mode of life." He speaks of them as being neither used as monasteries "nor occupied by earls or knights as secular powers for defence."

He asserts also that laymen purchase from the kings territories, under pretext of founding monasteries, of which they have themselves made abbots, where they live exempt

[1] "In a state of society where there was no means of investing savings, and little security for those unable to protect themselves, it was an obvious expedient that the old or feeble should make over their property to another upon the condition of being maintained during their life." "Rights of life maintenance of this kind were sold by the Church until a late period under the name of corrodies—a business in which the Templars embarked largely."—PREFACE TO *Senchus Mor.*

from public duties, and that they obtain like monasteries for their wives. Writing in his history in 731 of the times, which were then calm and peaceful, he says: "Many of the Northumbrian nation, as well of the nobility as private persons, laying aside their weapons, incline to accept the tonsure, and to dedicate both themselves and their children to monastic vows, rather than to exercise themselves in the study of military matters. What will be the end hereof the next age will show."

When Bede, a monk of North Humbria, at that time the most learned of all parts of Britain, could so write of the monasteries in the north, we are not surprised to find Asser the Welsh bishop, Alfred's biographer, 150 years later stating that "during many preceding years the taste for a monastic life had utterly ceased throughout the whole of this and of many other nations," which he attributes to the incursions of foreigners, and to the prevalence of too much wealth. We are not surprised at the difficulty experienced by Alfred in finding any monks for his monasteries, or at his translating the Scriptures into Saxon, on account of the ignorance of the Wessex clergy.

In both Scotland and Ireland it was not uncommon for the chief or king of a district to be archbishop,[1] bishop or abbot as well, and to raid and burn the monasteries and churches in his military expeditions. In fact, by this time the effect of the Scandinavian invasions in both islands had been to destroy and bring into disrepute the great tribal monastic schools which had been in the dark days of internecine warfare the refuge of the scholar and the social man.

There was no room, in a time when men were fighting for existence, for any institution which exempted the best born and the most fit from military service. The danger of whole families claiming this exemption on pretence of leading a religious life, no doubt inclined men who had no financial interest in the monasteries to look favourably, as a badly needed reform in the national life, on the introduction

[1] Witness Cormac M'Cullinan *supra*, and Crinan, lay abbot of Dunkeld, who marries the daughter of Malcolm of Scotland.

into Britain of the monastic rule of St. Benedict, enforcing poverty and chastity, and tending to confine the privileges of monastic life to persons who were really religious devotees.

But the reform did not rest with the attack on the abuse of monasteries by laymen only. The marriages of priests, hitherto a matter on which the Church had laid down no rule, conflicted with the Benedictine rule of chastity.[1]

This struggle between the married clergy or seculars[2] and the monks bound by vows or regulars,[2] began in Wessex very soon after Alfred's death; it met with strong opposition from those who had acquired lay interests in the monastic property; after many fluctuations it came to a head as a burning issue between political parties at Edwy's accession, partly, apparently, owing to the violence of Odo the Scandinavian archbishop of Canterbury and Dunstan the abbot of Glastonbury, the two chief leaders of the monastic party, at Edwy's coronation feast.

When the feast was at an end, and the drinking, of which there was a good deal too much,[3] was going on, the poor boy king, who had had quite enough mead and Welsh ale, stole away to the society of his sweetheart, Elgiva, to whom he was to be married, and her mother Ethelgiva. He was roughly dragged back to the feast by the abbot and the archbishop, who used most foul and abusive language to the two women.

The king's party, the Wessex nobility, was strong enough to turn Dunstan out of his office and force him to fly to Flanders; but Dunstan's political party, which would appear

[1] Another and most serious aspect of the danger which made reform necessary was this: by the marriage of the cleric the holding of his benefice tended to become hereditary, not in one person only, but in the family or tribe of the holders. Giraldus Cambrensis gives an account of such difficulties in Wales in his *Rebus a se gestis*. Of the eleven abbots who followed Columba only one was not closely related to him. Our common names testify to this descent from the priest: Clarkson, Parsons, Priest, M'Pherson (son of the parson), M'Nab (son of the abbot), O'Clery (son of the cleric), and so on.

[2] Soecula—those who conformed to the habits of the times or world. Regula—those who lived according to the rule.

[3] A custom to which the Scandinavians were much given.

to have been the Northmen north of the Thames, were able in a short time in their turn to force Edwy to separate from Elgiva, whom he had married, as being too nearly related,[1] and to make him give up the Scandinavian territory north of the Thames to his younger brother, Edgar, who ruled there until 958, when Edwy died.

This breaking away, under Dunstan, of the territories north of Wessex into independent states, not subject to any suzerainty of Wessex, was not unnatural under the strained relations both clerical and racial. An attempt was made at Edgar's death to follow the example by again dividing the country as an appanage for Ethelred II during his brother's life, but without success.

The division shows the inability of Wessex to control the foreign element in Mercia and North Humbria at all times. In spite of the advance northwards of the Wessex kings, they can have exercised little control over this part of England apart from their position as war leader against foes from abroad. The Church only, and only the monastic party of the Church, stood for federal unity, and that not always. Under Dunstan's guidance, Edgar, himself a king from the Danelaw, put Northmen in the chief church positions; York in particular had a succession of Danish archbishops.

The monastic influence remained in the ascendant throughout Edgar's reign. The work of turning out the married priests and putting in celibates went on steadily. The monks who register events in the Saxon Chronicle break forth into singing in their glee at the sweeping expulsion of the clerks, and express their admiration of the pious king.

Dunstan tried to extend the monastic rule to Wales. In 961 he consecrated one Gwgan to the See of Llandaff, urging him to enforce celibacy in his diocese. Gwgan ordered the monks and priests not to marry, but no notice was taken of his orders, and he found himself unable to enforce them.

On the accession of the third boy, Edward the Martyr, the monks for a brief space sing to a different tune. This

[1] Possibly a third or fourth cousin.

boy was at first under the control of the opposite party, and we are told of—

"Rule monastic quashed,
And minsters dissolved,
And monks drove out,
And God's servants put down," &c.

But the Benedictine rule, though it might meet with a check, was too much in accord with the spirit of the time, and far too sorely needed for the reformation of society, to be lightly set on one side. Under the leadership of Dunstan, who would appear to have been an extremely able man in close touch with the great thinkers on the Continent, the English monasteries gradually submitted to the principle of the celibacy [1] of the clergy, and in due course of time its example was followed in the other parts of the islands.

These disputes of monks and priests are intimately bound up with the politics of the day, and with the racial disputes between the foreign settlers and the English, but we have generally no sufficient authority to ascribe either ascendancy or opposition to any definite part of England.

When the monastic system thus regained its ascendancy over man, it came back charged with a twofold mission, guiding man to a more spiritual life by the example of a rigid asceticism, and binding society in one by submission to uniformity of doctrine and discipline, of which the Popes, whose frontier fortresses these monasteries had become, were the sole interpreters and judges.

Through the next five centuries the monasteries gave the tone to all human society. They were the schools in which the children were taught, the clubs in which budding manhood received its first impetuous direction, the offices in which the news-sheets of the day were written.

As lawyers, as "clerks" in government offices, in businesses of all kinds to which administrative ability was a key, the monks took the lead; in the quiet of their cloisters the

[1] The practice lagged a long way behind. In remote parts the clergy ignored it, and the kings, as for instance William Rufus and Henry I, exercised a dispensing power for money. The archdeacon was very frequently the bishop's son.

greatest minds revolved the problems of faith and hope suggested by the historical and philosophic fancies of the age, and formed new theories on which the coming generation could ruminate.

Every branch of learning took its bias from them; it is they who are responsible for the revival of the ancient languages. Great travellers and great farmers, they introduced new methods, new stock, new seeds, and improved the old.

What if even their own compilers of records love to dwell upon the actions of prominent ecclesiastics which are in conflict with their professions, rather than on that quiet discharge of routine duties which do not make history. In spite of the degradation of the papacy, in spite of the degeneracy of the later monastic life which was bound up with it, the morality which through them the Church introduced leavened the whole social life of nations. The parish took the place of the township or of whatever else had been the unit of village life in tribal times; the labourer rested on the Sunday; and the sick and the weak found the protection which was denied to them by the lay world.

It is not for the expulsion of the married clerks on which the chronicler so loves spitefully to dwell, or even for the enforcement of decent lives among the clergy, that posterity owes thanks to the Benedictine monks. It is for their regulation of social evils, their war against social vice, their gospel of the dignity of manual labour, the steadfast suppression of men's baser passions, the continuous upholding to savage fighters of the ideal of an eternal love, the persistency with which, harshly and grudgingly perhaps, they urged the acknowledgment by the brute force of man of the rights of humanity in the women sold in matrimony, for which the world must thank them.

That in the enforcement of all this they failed themselves to attain, or to keep for long the high level of their own ideal, is little for detraction. They held up to times of gross excess and social laxity a high ideal of self-sacrifice and self-abnegation. They raised humanity for all time.

II. Maccus, King of Man

We have very little knowledge indeed of the events in Wessex during the next twenty years, and what knowledge we have from Wessex is very unreliable.

The chronicler is so jubilant recording the victories of the celibate monks over the married clerks that he pays small attention to any other affairs of the nation. We know from other sources that during Edgar's reign (who from this cause is called "the Pacific") the invasion from Scandinavia had for the moment ceased, and that there was peace. But of the causes of this peace, and even of its existence, the Saxon Chronicle is silent. We are left to guess whether the cessation of Norse raids was as complete as the silence of the Saxon Chronicle would intimate, or whether to the man in the monastery they appeared to be of little importance beside the clerical struggle.[1] If the attacks came mainly from the West, little notice would be taken of them by men at Peterboro or Winchester. Except for two items, the ravaging of Cumbria by Edgar through a Norse thane, Thord Gunnarsson, in 966, and the ravaging of Thanet by Edgar himself in 968, most likely to prevent the settlement of Norse pirates, the only news of interest in his reign of sixteen years which reaches us is that in 973 he went to Chester, where he was met by Kenneth III, king of Alban or Scotland, Malcolm king of Cumbria, three or five other princes of Wales, and possibly of Ireland, and one Maccus, a Viking, king of the Isle of Man, and the Sudreys.

Edgar, as overlord, made a compact with these princes, to be kept as long as it was convenient, for offence or defence against attack.

As Wessex and Alfred's Mercia only touched the west coast at all in the two estuaries of the Severn and the Dee, the inclusion in this alliance of one of the most powerful of the island Norse rulers of the West, whose territories were quite outside any part of Edgar's sphere of operations,

[1] According to the *Egil's Saga*, Sweyn and Palnatoki, the chief of the Iomsburg Vikings, were in Wales about 950.

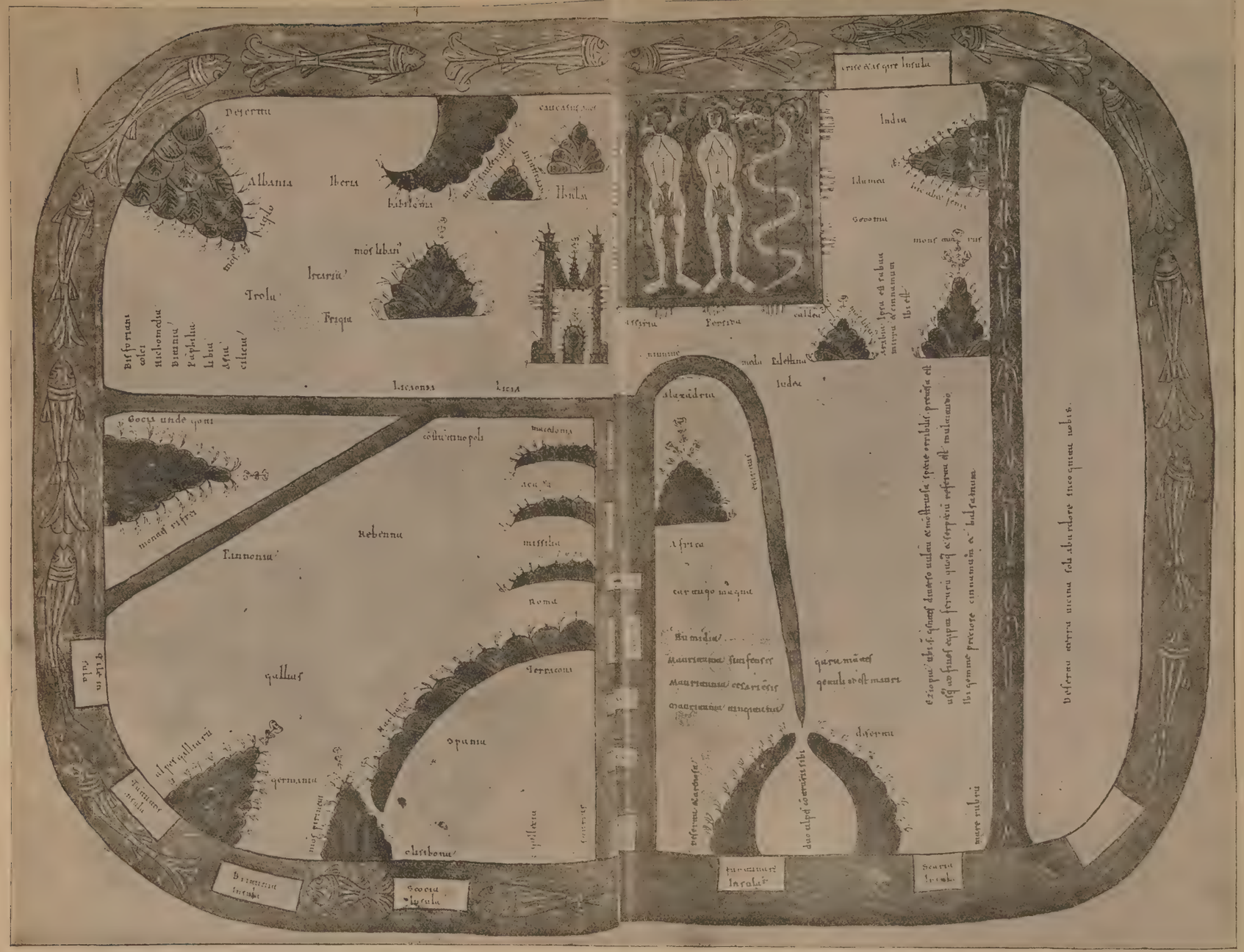
could mean only that the ships of Maccus were hired as mercenaries to keep the peace in these Western seas.

This hiring by Edgar would be quite in keeping with the customs of the time, and a far safer and cheaper policy in the West than any attempt to defend the coast by home forces. Such an arrangement would weaken the Northmen themselves, it would prevent any unstable sub-kings from obtaining a naval predominance at the expense of Wessex, and it could be used against the other members of the confederation both in North Humbria, Strathclyde, Scotland, or Wales. As against any revolt of the Welsh either in Strathclyde, Wales, or Cornwall, a friendly Norse fleet in the rear would be especially useful.

In the event of serious invasion being made of Wessex, the most that could be expected of the large Norse population in Mercia and the North, ruled by Scandinavians, and liable to be reinforced from Ireland, Scotland, Man, Denmark, and Norway, was that they should be sullenly neutral to the rule of a monk and a boy.

It would seem that Dunstan intended to substitute for the warlike policy of Edward, Athelstan, and Edmund the much wiser course, where the king was a minor and the armies might be led by a disaffected earl or under-king, of alliance with the Northmen now settled in the North and West, subsidising some of them as mercenaries. But for the misfortune of the continued minorities, and the division introduced into the State by the religious disputes, the plan might have succeeded. The constant intermarriages, and the great number of Christian Northmen in the State, made active measures by Wessex against the North very dangerous.

Man was a most convenient base connecting Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and North Humbria through Strathclyde. Later, under the changed conditions of Scandinavia, it became the storm centre of Norse invasion and intrigue. It was well suited for all the purposes of the Northmen, as a trading centre, a bank for plunder, and a naval base for attack.



LONDON SPANISH ARABIC BEATUS MAP OF THE WORLD (776–1109)

See Introductory Chapter, p. lii

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This Maccus or Magnus, king of Man and the Isles, descended from Ivar, the founder of the Norse kingdom of Limerick, was the fifth of the dynasty of the Northmen who had settled Man. He is called by Florence "plurimarum rex insularum," and by William of Malmesbury "totius Angliæ archipirata." He signs in Edgar's charter for Glastonbury next after the king of Scotland.

Such an engagement with Edgar to defend Wessex would not prevent Maccus from carrying on raids on his own account in other parts of the islands or against other Northmen. In 969 he had raided Anglesea, and in 974, the year after the meeting at Chester, he plundered Scattery Island, at the mouth of the Shannon, and captured Ivar, king of the Limerick Northmen.[1]

Until a national standing army or navy which could be relied on for a prolonged term of service came into being, it was a common and convenient practice, instead of calling the population from the plough, to hire mercenary ships and troops, men whose sole business in life was fighting for plunder and money, to defend the country against occasional invasions. So far from there being any degradation in this course being followed by a powerful monarch, it was only the most powerful monarch who could afford the cost; it would be a very natural course to take when the king was a

[1] It may be as well to notice here that in many of those cases in which the Northmen have been so vehemently accused by the monks and their successors of breach of faith, there was not necessarily any conscious breach. They had no maps. They had no knowledge of the accurate boundaries of kingdoms, when such existed. When they made pact not to plunder any set territory, it left all territory outside of that district open to attack.

The nineteenth-century historians, following Mr Freeman's lead, have assumed a consolidation of empire which never existed, in the place of a loose tribal confederation. It is more than probable that when peace was made by the Northmen with the Witan, those parts only which contributed were exempt from attack, Cornwall, Wales, and the North being excluded and attacks on the interior being weakly repulsed, if the interior had not paid up. Canterbury and East Kent generally paid up separately. In any case, as there were no ordnance maps, there is no reason to suppose that the Northmen (if it was the same band which attacked the second time) was cognisant of any exact boundary, or that any such exact boundary existed.

The monastic mediæval maps are very significant of the geographical ignorance of all parties.

minor, governed by an astute monk, who wisely would be most unwilling to submit the provisions for a national defence to the disputes and criticisms of a Witan, by whom alone the temporary territorial army or navy could be raised and paid.

Though such a course was optional in the case of land operations, it was almost essential for any prolonged defence by sea.

Judging by the general breakdown of the national fleet when it came into action in Ethelred's reign and the accusation of treachery, incompetence, and ill faith which it occasioned, the arrangement with Maccus was a safe and satisfactory one. As we have no notice to the contrary, we must assume that the agreement with him held good until his death in 977, the year before the accession of Ethelred II. There would always be good plunder to pay Maccus in Ireland and Wales and other places outside of Wessex.

Edgar died in 975, leaving two boy sons, Edward, aged thirteen, the child of Ethelfleda, the daughter of a Northern earl, and Ethelred, aged seven, the child of Elfrida (Ælfthryth), the widow of an East Anglian earl.

An attempt was made to repeat the division of the kingdom, as it had been made between Edwy and Edgar, between these children, in favour of Ethelred, but it did not succeed.

Edward's short reign was full of disputes and trouble, both religious and political, but the details are not sufficiently clear to explain the cause.

After three years' reign in 978 the young king is said to have been stabbed in the back, while sitting on his horse, drinking a stirrup cup at the door of his stepmother's palace. His death went unavenged; Ethelred was at once crowned by the two archbishops of Canterbury and York without opposition.

III. Overlord and Vassal

The relations between the more powerful states and the weaker states in all parts of Britain, from the first view of

the heathen Saxons in the fifth century to the time of which we are now speaking, are expressed by all historians in the terms Bretwalda, Emperor, Ardri, Suzerain, over-king, or overlord for the superior state, and vassal, subject, under-king, and so forth for the weaker.

It is necessary, before going further, to consider what is the import of these words, and what was the actual consequence of this relation between the rulers of states.

The statements of monastic writers, writing often like William of Malmesbury, a century or several centuries after the events related, and copying blindly from lives of saints, or other fictions written nearer the time, have been taken at their face value, where the writer has condescended, which he seldom does, to give any details. Of what extent was the right of the overlord? Could he raise money by taxing his vassal? Could he legislate for him? Could he appoint his lay or his clerical officers? Could he use any part of the vassal population as a standing force for war?

After careful consideration of the very scanty notices of the consequences of the relation of overlord and vassal, I am inclined to look upon the confederation represented by these words as, in the main, solely a system of mutual insurance against external war.

The weaker ruler was willing to pay a yearly tribute of hides or money, or without paying tribute to weaken his own authority by acknowledging a superior in a neighbouring state, in return for the promise that, in the event of serious attack from without, the ruler, whose "man" he promised to be, would protect him by military force.

How much or how little the terms may have expressed at any time during this five hundred or six hundred years depended on the strength and prestige at the time of the superior state, and on the circumstances of the day which would tighten or loosen the alliance. Where the danger was alarming and immediate the premium became a war risk; where there was no cloud in the sky the vassal state was inclined to let the tribute fall in arrear, or to make other alliances not congruous with its pledge to the superior.

When the force of the Scandinavian raids of the ninth century had been felt throughout Britain, the kings of Scotland, and the princes of Wales, and the Norse settlers in North Humbria and East Anglia were willing to acknowledge Alfred's descendants as "father and lord." But although the relation was unlike that of a modern colony to the present country in that it was no growth of sentiment, it was like it in the unwillingness to go on with the insurance when the danger was past or less pressing; just as the American colonies revolted against the mother country when called on to contribute to the expenses of a war waged for their protection after the French in Canada had been crushed.

Except for this mutual alliance for defence, or possibly offence, there would not appear to have been anything further in the relation.

It would not appear that the overlord had any powers of legislation, of taxation, or of raising levies from his subkingdoms.

We have no suggestion of interference with local law or custom; on the contrary, the Danelagh retained its own laws until the Norman Conquest and later, the Welsh until the fourteenth century, and the Scots always.

The tributes paid to Wessex by the Welsh princes, if they ever were paid, are not such as would be either lucrative to the overlord, or burdensome to the vassal. If, as William of Malmesbury tells, Edgar imposed a tribute upon a Welsh prince of 300 wolves' heads (which sounds silly, as wolves killed in Radnorshire or Cardigan could be of no benefit to the Mercian or the man of Wessex), such a tribute was only an acknowledgment of lordship, like the horseshoe nails delivered at the present day by the city of London to the representatives of the king's exchequer.

Where the tribute imposed was substantial, the only way in which the overlord could make use of it was to go and eat it up. Thus the Ardris of Ireland enforced and devoured their revenues from the underkings by the circuits which from time to time they made, at the same time punishing

by heavier assessments those in arrear, or those who had refused payment.

Where tribute was made in kind, there must always have been ground for dispute as to value or condition. Skins which had been cut, or were not sufficiently salted or too much injured by warbles, or honey from indifferent or poisonous plants, must have given ground for many a quarrel if the overlord desired an opportunity to raid.

Except where a chief went to war deliberately to annex fruitful grazing land from another tribe, which was not so common now that the overlord had a nearer authority, all wars and quarrels at that time came from some small dispute of this kind. The silver button off Mailmora's coat, which brought on the slaughter of Clontarf, had its counterpart in every decade in all parts of the islands.

Though the kings of Wessex and of Ireland encouraged the attendance of their sub-kings at their courts, much as in later days the Normans and Angevin kings dallied with the king of Scots and the princes of Wales, we do not hear of the overlord being called on for assistance, except for the defence of their own territory, or that of a close neighbour.

At what point the assistance of the overlord was to be given; what degree of danger justified the request; this must have been left to the party calling for it to decide. Apart from the loss of prestige which such a step brought to the local ruler, the entrance of the armed forces of his overlord on his territory might well be more dangerous than a single-handed fight against a known enemy. In South African history the Dutch Boer has fought single-handed against the Kaffir rather than call in the assistance of the British, whose protection he technically acknowledged. In 1893 the governor of Oregon, then in a state of civil war, furiously repudiated the proffered assistance of the Federal Government of the United States to put down disorder.

So when Hasting lands in Kent in 893, Alfred makes no move for a year, until the East Anglians rise to help the Northmen; so, when the Northmen of East Anglia are

attacked in Ethelred's time, they do not call on the Wessex overlord for assistance against the invader, but call out their own local fyrd.

All the ordinary relations of the overlord and his vassal were upset by this naval war. In the ordinary state of things, the overlord fighting on his vassal's behalf could recoup himself for his pains by taking cattle and crops from those whom he was called on to fight. Such campaigns were profitable to him, and his other vassals, even if he had no right to call on them for help, would be only too glad of the opportunity for plunder in return for assistance. This certainty that all the others would be on his back was the only thing that kept any tribal leader quiet.

But with these new enemies there was not only no plunder to be obtained, but no certainty that they would be in view, when the overlord or the other vassals had left their harvest and crossed rivers and mountains to meet them with their forces.

Very early in the story the over-kings abandoned any attempt to give assistance against a force so mobile, who offered no chance of repayment of the cost.

Alfred appears to have been content when he had driven or persuaded Guthrum or Hasting beyond the borders of Wessex into Mercia or East Anglia. The earldom must look after itself. Nor did the Ardri Malachi give help to Mahon or Brian in their death struggle with the Northmen of Limerick in 968, nor Brian to Malachi in his similar struggle before Clontarf. The local forces only were effective for such attacks: it would be useless to call on the men of North Humbria to help to repel an attack on the coast of Dorset or Devon.

Why should the Wessex villager leave his crops, risking famine to his people, and possibly a descent of the Northmen in his absence, to bring assistance to the men of East Anglia? The raiding fleet would be gone long before the Wessex militia reached the East.

Yet this mutual aid was the only tie which bound either to the other. Naturally the allegiance of the under-king was

strong only in proportion to the ability of his overlord to give him assistance.

The campaigns of Edward the Elder and of Athelstan are of interest, only so far as they draw closer or weaken the ties between the rulers. When, after Brunanburg, the more distant provinces were made earldoms, and learnt to rely on their own strength as independent principalities, the tie became weaker if the distant overlord was unable to make his power felt. But for the Scandinavian invasions, the whole island would probably soon have been under one head. But the Northumbrian or East Anglian earl may be pardoned if he looked to the Northman on the spot able to protect him, especially if he were himself a Northman, rather than to the distant overlord, himself on his defence against the invader.

Very much the same condition exists later under the Angevin kings. Henry II tries to avoid the instability of the under-kings by making his sons rulers of his continental dominions. They rebel against him. In his first struggle with them he meets them with his feudal levies in England and with mercenary troops on the Continent, and is successful. In his last, his mercenaries, seeing more plunder and better pay on the other side, leave him, and he dies in defeat. The conditions are very much the same with both Saxon and Angevin.

CHAPTER XII

THE NORTHMEN COME AGAIN

Note

[It may be convenient to state here certain conclusions arrived at by the author from his study of the whole period of these Scandinavian invasions.

After the first invasion in the fifth century from Scandinavia, there was no cessation of communication between the Baltic and Britain, the ships of the seamen from Denmark and old Saxony sailing freely along the coast from the Elbe to the Nore, and up the East coast to the Humber and Tweed.

Soon after this invasion began, the missionary enterprise from Ireland shows Irishmen tempting a far more adventurous sea voyage. The voyages of the Scandinavians from Jutland and Sleswig would appear to have been merely timid coasting, clinging to the contour of the coast, and rounding the headlands; but when Columbanus and St. Gall went in 585 to Burgundy they must either go round by St. David's and the Cornish coast and so across to the Bay to the mouth of the Loire (for they would wish to go by Tours), or to beat up the Channel to the Seine, or else a most dangerous land journey under a safe conduct to Kent, in which case the incentive for Augustine's mission came from Ireland. For Columbanus was not the man to go through Kent without making an effort to convert Kent. When Columbanus tries to return to Ireland, he goes down the Loire from Tours, and takes an Irish ship at Nantes, showing a trade-route between Ireland and the Loire, which had probably never been discontinued. Judging by what we know of these missionaries the Irishman of those days was a courageous seaman.

When at the end of the eighth century the new Scandinavian invasion opens there is no reason to suppose that these communications between the east and west had been in any way hindered, and they were surely going on when the Saxon Chronicle under 787 records the arrival between 785–802 (the Chronicle is here evidently not contemporary), of three ships of the Northmen from Heredaland (this is probably Hordaland), in Norway. The entry speaks of them as "Danish men," but this term may have become usual at the time when the entry was made.

From this time there are notices in the English Chronicles of the incursions of foreign pirates on the east and south coasts of England, sometimes called "heathen men" and sometimes "Danes" ("Danes" on the south coast), and on other parts of the islands in the north and west, in the Welsh and Irish annals.

Meanwhile the increase of population on the coasts of the Baltic and North Sea had driven the peoples from the East into the dense forests of Sweden, and through them to the Norwegian coast. The deep inlets of the coast made seamanship a necessity, breeding a race of fearless navigators; at the end of the eighth century these people from Norway were striking straight out across the ocean to the Orkneys, Shetlands, and Hebrides. Through these they invaded Ireland and Man, settling at the same time on the coast of Cumbria north of Chester, and in the flat lands of Anglesey. Possibly to some extent the pressure of the empire of Charlemagne was felt even in this movement; but it was due not so much to this as to the desire for more elbow room in hunting grounds, and hope of adventure and plunder. This need was felt in Denmark and on the north coast of Europe long before the forests of Sweden and Norway ceased to satisfy the demands of the hunter.

Thus from the ninth century onwards there were two distinct streams of emigration to Britain, one a continuance of the original coasting expeditions from Jutland and Sleswig and the lands about the Elbe and the Oder, and the other resulting from the geographical position of Norway, the

bold voyages of discovery in the course of which the Norse Colonial Empire in the West of Britain was built up by individual efforts, partly by the help of and partly in spite of the authority of the kings in Norway, who claimed and exercised an uncertain control over it.

During the whole period of these invasions of Britain, whether it was at a time when Viking piracy was discouraged by Scandinavian rulers, or a time when they openly or latently supported it, the rulers of the Norwegians and the Danes had a quarrel standing ready at hand.

Viken, the bay, was the meeting place for all expeditions west, from the lands south of Hordaland and east of Jutland. The territory adjoining this on the west, south and west of the River Gaut and its lakes, a district called Gautland, acknowledged the overlordship of Svithiod, the district to the north, which has now given its name to Sweden. But it, like North Humbria, was an independent earldom, leaning to Sweden or Norway, as its action meant freedom from plunder. Scania south of this belonged to the Danes, and may have had racial connection with the Danish peninsula. One has only to look at the map to see what a pretty quarrel was ready to the hands of the rulers of either of the three districts. The land south of the Gaut was the Lothian of the Norwegian and Dane.

Until agriculture settled the man upon the land, and so induced a loyalty to the land which gave him bread, by associating his success and his comfort with the land and with his tribe his neighbours on the land, all loyalty was personal to a leader for a time only. As this personal loyalty became hereditary it tended to become "feudal," as we call it, associated with the holding of a certain definite tract of land for cultivation and not for hunting. This is followed by the claim of the greater king to guide the course of action of the lesser, and to tax them for his designs for increase of territory with which he could pay his followers.

This submission to a common overlord, even when the management of national affairs is conceded in its widest form, is far easier of acceptance in an agricultural than in a

stock-raising or hunting community. Cultivation of land implies individual ownership and consequent enclosure. Stock-raising or hunting assumes the ranging of cattle in open spaces or free pasture of wild animals on unenclosed land. The cultivator of land is tied by his crops and his improvements to the land, and cannot afford to push his independence of central authority too far; the stockbreeder or hunter (like the investor in foreign securities to-day) can get up and go to another country, very likely to a more fertile pasture, making division like Lot and Abraham of the new lands. So when Gorm the old and Harold Fairhair compelled submission to the overlord in Scandinavia, it was open to the great bondes or landowners to take ship with their families and servants and stock and household goods, and, leaving the worthless land behind, to find fresh homes in Iceland or in the West of Britain. On the other hand, the influence of the monasteries in Wessex towards federal unity was as much due to their encouragement of cultivation of land and good farming as to any moral precepts which may have borne upon it.

As all Scandinavia remained to a very large degree a hunting and stock-raising country, the relation between the mass of the people and those in authority (which we in Britain call the "constitution"), gave, both in Scandinavia and in their colonies in Britain, the extreme of freedom both of speech and action to the men who met at the Thing or assembly for discussion of public affairs, an institution which was natural to every one of the truly democratic small kingdoms. When in the course of years the greater kings asserted the right to a controlling voice in the affairs of the smaller, they were compelled to regard the opinions of the leaders in the sub-kingdoms, whether in the old country or in the colonies, calling local Things for discussion, and to modify their larger designs according to the opposition which they met. It is to this Scandinavian democracy that we owe much of our freedom of speech and action.

There is no sign in any of the British Chronicles of the

free speech which is recorded in the accounts given in the sagas of the "Things" called by the Norwegian kings.

The language used in the speeches of the bondes to Olaf Trygvasson and Olaf the Saint is likely to be quite as fictitious as any recorded in the British annals. But there is a ring of sincerity and reality about the sentiments expressed which may be looked for in vain in the magnificent periods of Malmesbury.

As the invaders or settlers of Britain crossed from the east coast to the west and to Ireland, or sailed south from the Orkneys along the west coast of Scotland, or sailed north from the Scilly Islands round the coast of Wales (except where these last sailed direct to the Shannon or the southern ports of the Irish coast), the two streams met in the Isle of Man. Whether they fought in the Hebrides, or in Cumbria, or raided Wales through Anglesey, or Wessex through Chester, or Ireland through Dublin or Waterford, Man was a centre from which they could refit and provision their fleets, and to which they could retire. When the last great attack on Ireland is made at Clontarf, it is in the Orkneys and Man that the expedition is prepared. It is most difficult to say with certainty when the leaders and fighters of the Northmen in Man were Danes and when they were Norwegian. Both in turn, like the French and English in India, held the island. There is not, as a rule, much reliance to be placed upon philological deductions from place-names, unless one knows the conditions under which they were given, but it is significant that in such a small and isolated place as Man there are a very large number of Norwegian and very few Danish names.

As the commercial intercourse and the invasion and settlement flows and eddies among the islands, the Scandinavians fight among themselves as well as with the islanders, and they unite for quarrel or conquest, for plunder or "gathering property" as the saga calls it, with each other or with the native, and they intermarry with each other or with the native.

The daughter of Ethelred I of Wessex becomes the

queen Thyra of Denmark, who built the Dannevirke, the daughter of Constantine II of Scotland marries Olaf Cuaran of Dublin, and the daughter of Malcolm of Scotland Sigurd the earl of the Orkneys. Athelstan of Wessex gives his sister to Sitric of Dublin, king of the North Humbrians, Olaf Trygvasson of Norway marries Gyda the sister of Olaf Cuaran, who had been previously married to an Englishman, Gormlaith of Leinster becomes successively the wife of Olaf Cuaran, of Malachi of Meath, and of Brian of Munster, and Sigurd the crusader is betrothed to Biedmynja the daughter of the king of Munster.

It does not appear from any of the chronicles, annals, or sagas that any of these people had any difficulty in understanding one another's language. It would look as if there were little difference between the dialects of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark in those days or even between the language of Scandinavia and North Humbria;[1] no more possibly than between the English spoken in the United States, England, and Australia. Perhaps it was for this reason that the contemporary chroniclers of Wessex call them all "Danes," not distinguishing any more than the Greek or Italian would now distinguish between the American of Pittsburg and the man of East London. The Irish annals do make the distinction between the Danars or Black Lochlonnachs (Danes) and the fair Lochlonnachs (Norwegians). It is even possible that Olaf the White, who married Aude the very wealthy, was so-called to distinguish him as a Norwegian, or that Harold the Black of Islay, the father of Godred Crovan king of Man, was so-called as a Dane. Through this unfortunate misnomer it has become extremely difficult to distinguish between the nationalities of the invaders, as our later historians have

[1] That there was a difference we know from the sagas, but apparently no great one. Styrkar, the Marshal of Harold Hardrada, flying from the defeat of Stamford Bridge, meets a man in a lined skincoat. He asks the man to sell it to him. "Not to thee," says the peasant. "Thou art a Northman; that I can hear by thy tongue;" but he does not seem to have had any difficulty in understanding him. *Harold Hardrada's Saga*, chap. xcviii.

stereotyped the error, accepting the want of distinction, and leaving us nothing to correct it except a laborious collation of authorities from all parts, and the uncertain evidence of pedigree. But it is as necessary to make the distinction for a full understanding of the story, as it would be to distinguish the different Europeans in India for an elementary understanding of the British conquests there. For the islanders made alliances where possible with one body of Scandinavians against the other, and we can only understand the operations in any part of Britain if we know who were likely to be the allies, and who the enemies. Undoubtedly the overlord in Wessex played off one against the other in North Humbria, bringing in a Norwegian from Dublin to rule a Danish population if it was one.

The great peasant proprietors of Scandinavia each had his own ship or ships, manned with his followers and serfs, with which he went on Viking cruises in summer, or fled from the vengeance of his enemy.[1] Except when kings such as Sweyn or Magnus Barfod came for conquest, these and similar levies from the Orkneys and the Hebrides form the attacking force.

When the Norwegian or Danish over-king comes he has to reckon with the difficulties of the fyrd or militia navy which beset all the rulers of the islands. He brings with him some of his own private ships, such as Alfred had and Edgar may have had, besides the militia force. But this last is only bound to serve for a limited period, and has a great deal to say as to the point of attack and the naval operations. They will naturally wish for a campaign which will give them most plunder. Hakon's misfortunes at Largs in 1263 were largely due to the refusal of his militia ships to follow out his plan of campaign.

But apart from this, the invader was on a very different footing with his militia from the island rulers. Plunder

[1] As, for instance, when Kalf Arnason, threatened by Magnus the Good, has his ship manned at a moment's notice by his house servants, his goods placed on board, and the same night goes off to plunder in Ireland and the Hebrides.

was the only reason for any military or naval expedition then. The Scandinavian militia would very willingly bring their ships on a summer cruise which promised plunder—they were born seamen; the Saxon or the Irish Fyrd of inland labourers would most unwillingly assemble to wait for a hard battle with an enemy from whom little or nothing could be got. The only chance of a retort was an invasion from Britain into Scandinavia, the attempt to plunder Nidaros or Lejre or Upsala. If Alfred had not been a Christian he and Othere might possibly have gone on a cruise together.

It is very difficult to ascertain from any of the records when the change from pagan to Christian of the Northmen began in any part. It was so much a matter of policy, and often was so tentative and meant so little, that it is only mentioned in the sagas or Irish annals when it happens to fit into the story. Thus in the saga of Olaf the Saint the casual mention in chapter li. that he built a church in Nidaros is the first notice that he is a Christian. The perusal of the Irish annals leave the impression that the Northmen were often Christians during the invasions, and the same may be said of the English chronicles. The process of conversion was a very gradual one.

Undoubtedly Viking raids were so common on all coasts that in the absence of telegraphy any national effort involved risk of false alarm of national invasion when there was only an ordinary plundering expedition. In the saga of Hakon the Good, for instance, it is told how Hakon Athelstan fostre had arranged a series of beacons to guard against invasion by the sons of Eric Bloodaxe. But the people had got into the habit of lighting the beacons to call their neighbours to help repel isolated Viking raids. Hakon laid heavy penalties on their so doing, which resulted in Eric's sons being enabled to creep up the coast unnoticed and nearly conquer Norway. The difficulty occasioned by such feverish fear would be equally great in Britain, and the crying of wolf equally disastrous. Very naturally the defence rallied very leisurely to any such call.]

The Northmen observed a consistent policy of attacking the point of least resistance. Where there was a strong central government they contented themselves with trading. The stout resistance of London, which closed the Thames to their ships, the stubborn defence of Wessex by Alfred, and the steady advance of his successors to the north warned them off from the south of the larger island, so that from the end of the reign of Edward the Elder up to the accession of Ethelred II, so far as they attacked Britain at all in force, they concerned themselves mainly with Ireland, settling and consolidating at the same time the western coast of Scotland and the Isles, and fighting fiercely among themselves. There being little reinforcement from Scandinavia, they were too much occupied in holding their own in these parts, and in quarrelling over their conquests, to concern themselves much with the country of the "pacific" Edgar.

Before entering on this last phase of the Scandinavian attacks I would again recall the conditions under which they were repelled.

The invasion affected all parts of all the islands; it must be read of as a whole: get out of your minds that narrowing, blinding notion that any part of the failure was due to the "wickedness" or incompetence of a king. That is conclusively answered by the historical fact that in 1014 after Ethelred II had led the forces of Wessex for thirty-six years, the Witan recalled him to the throne as soon as the pressure of the Northmen loosened, and that when all the rest of the country had failed him, the great city of London stood by him to the last. He reigned for thirty-eight years until his death. If he had been an incompetent king he could not have reigned thirty-eight months.

There was no national life beyond the slight tie of alliance between the overlord and sub-kings, and that tie broke down absolutely as against a foe who gave no chance of plunder, owned no home that could be attacked, and moved so quickly that land forces could not be assembled in time to strike him before he was gone.

Apart from this, the tie was in ordinary cases liable to be

broken by the defection of the sub-king, if his immediate interests seemed to be better served by changing sides.

The great trade with the North and the armed character of the naval trader made action by the defender impossible until the armed trader developed into the armed enemy.

The great value of the trade and the absence of any national control over it made this change from trader to pirate the easier.

The enemy were better armed, better fed, free from the hampering necessity of protecting food supplies, able to choose their own base and their own point of attack, learned in the art of fortification, and regardless of their pledged word when it suited them.

Besides the adverse circumstances which always affect those who wait to be invaded, conditions had altered in other ways since Alfred's day so as to seriously affect the chances of defence.

The composition of the population had altered. The wealth of Britain, the advantages of its commerce, had brought to it as in the present day the introduction of foreign blood on a very large scale, an admixture which would be more noticeable in the great seaports and among the sailors than elsewhere. The Irish kings in their wars had the advantage over Wessex in that the Northmen had very early established themselves in great strength in three prominent trading ports as masters, so that there was always something to hit at.

Alfred had fought his battles in Wessex with the men of Wessex, but Edgar spent his boyhood in East Anglia under the influence of Alfwena, the dowager queen of the Danish Guthrum, and this and the unifying monasticism had had the effect of gradually introducing into office even in Wessex men of Norse blood with Norse connections. The first wife of Ethelred himself, Elfleda the mother of Edmund Ironside, was the daughter of Thured, a Danish chief.

The encouragement given to the Northmen, and the use of them as mercenary soldiers by Athelstan and his successors, is hinted at in the Chronicles as a cause of

misfortune. In view of the extended operations in North Humbria, this placing of power in the hands of Dane or Norwegian was necessary. But it accounts for some of the later difficulties of Wessex. Of Edgar the poetical monk says that he "outlandish men hither enticed and harmful people allured to this land." Undoubtedly the foreign element was very large, including men of high position and much property, such as Pallig, the husband of Gunhild, Sweyn's sister, who deserted to Sweyn at a critical moment in 1001. After St. Brice the Icelandic Scald Gunlang Ormstunga still remains with Ethelred.

We know from the coins found in Gothland that there was an extensive trade with Scandinavia in Ethelred's time, a great part of it being with London and Bristol. The hostile raids and the commerce act and react on each other, causing an increase of Northmen in the islands, traders who at any moment may become pirates, and pirates who may settle as peaceful citizens.

In Ethelred's time the Northmen who have settled have largely mixed with the Saxons, and to a limited extent form one nation with them, as in Ireland they mixed with the Irish. But only to a limited extent. They are still separable racially as Northmen; they are still open to the call from men of their own race, who can back their claim to rule with solid power. When Norman William claims the throne of Wessex, his task is made greatly easier by the leaning of the East and North to a Norse ruler. They may not like William. But they hate Saxon Wessex, and under the combined hatred of North Humbria and Normandy it goes under.

The feeling of distrust is not on the one side only. Wessex does not trust the Scandinavian. It knows that in time of danger it must count on lukewarmness or open hostility from this part of the population. And hence in time of great danger the massacre of St. Brice.

Another great change was in the condition at sea.

So long as the danger to be met was that of sporadic raids on the south or east coast they could be met from

Wessex as Alfred met them, either by allowing the invader to land and meeting him on land, or by tackling him at sea with a fleet built in Wessex or East Anglia. This last Alfred attempted, in the main unsuccessfully, with the few "long ships" built and manned with Frisian mercenaries out of his own personal revenues.

We have no means of ascertaining how far his successors had occasion to use fleets, or to follow his example. Athelstan, we are told, invaded Scotland by sea as well as by land, but whether the boats were built and manned in North Humbria, or were a mercenary fleet of Northmen (which would be quite in keeping with the habits of the times), there is nothing to tell us.

But during those times the noose tightened round Wessex until no half measures at sea could save her. By 979, the seaports and the great rivers of Ireland were in the hands of the Danes and Norwegians; the Norwegian possessions in the western islands and the west coast of Scotland had been fully settled, and the Northmen occupied Normandy, controlled Flanders, and held all England north of a line drawn (roughly) from Chester by way of Bedford to London as independent earldoms under Wessex.

Then comes the arrangement with Maccus, which puts a Norse fleet in the hands of the Wessex kings. How long this arrangement lasted, whether to Maccus's death in 977 only, or to Dunstan's death in 988, there is nothing to show. Dunstan may or may not have retired from public life in his last days, but in any case the monk who wrote the later Chronicles took care to represent him as prophesying the disasters that occurred, and as not responsible for them. If his policy of protecting the coasts in the west by a mercenary fleet off Chester had been given up, the excusing of Dunstan would be justified.

In Ethelred's reign we hear for the first time of a temporary fleet being collected as a national force by means of a national tax on land, by the orders of the king and his Witan. But there is nothing to suggest to us that beyond the limits of Wessex, of Western Mercia, possibly

of central East England, the king had any power of levy either of ships or of men.

When any fleet was assembled at any one point it would, except for great seaports such as London or Bristol, which provided for their own defence, be a local levy, not of seamen specially, and a levy for a time only.

The difficulty of assembling an efficient fleet for defence would seem to be insuperable. The Irish kings, even in their most victorious days, never attempted it. For the Wessex kings the only purely Saxon seaboard was south of the Thames; the command of the sea had been allowed to pass so completely into the hands of the Northmen, that the sailors were in great part Norse. It would be dangerous for the Wessex king to encourage the building of ships among the population north of the Thames.

When these fleets of boats with their little crews of twenty men or so had been built and manned in the different ports along the coast, a long and dangerous delay took place between the order and its execution before they could be assembled for defence at any one point. Probably many were lost on the way. And when they had been assembled, as there was no standing navy, and no means to keep it afloat, the ships' crews went home when the term of service had expired, and the navy was disbanded, as likely as not at the crucial moment of the campaign. This happened to Harold's fleet just before the battle of Hastings, enabling William to cross safely to Sussex.

When a Wessex fleet is heard of at this time, it is met with either in the north-west opposite Man or Anglesey, or watching the narrows of the channels in defence of London.

When collected, the whole fleet would have to keep together and wait for the enemy, who could change his objective if he heard of the defence, and go elsewhere. If distributed along the coast at likely points, there would be no chance on his approach of collecting them in time.

Under such conditions there would not appear to have been any chance for a successful defence, if the defenders

waited for the enemy to arrive. They never knew in what quarter to expect him, or how far he might be assisted by the foreign population; he never gave them a chance of a battle in the open if he could possibly avoid it, his plan being always to land, plunder, and retreat to his ships.

It is to the credit of Wessex that, while the Northmen early settled and held the cities of Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford under their Norse kings, at the close of the struggle in 1016 the Danes had no settlements in Wessex. London had been held against them, and their only base was the Isle of Wight, from which a weaker naval force could not dislodge them.[1] We hear of no naval battles in the Irish wars, but Ethelred made efforts, both west, south, and east, to meet his foes at sea.

The only remedy, if remedy there was, lay in counter-attacks, such as those with which Pitt met the threat of invasion from Normandy during the Seven Years' War. Here another difficulty met Ethelred and his advisers. Pitt's counterstroke could be delivered close home in the enemy's country, the source from which he had drawn his forces. But the only effectual attack for Ethelred to make was to disturb the plunder depots in Flanders, in Normandy, in the Orkneys, Man and Anglesey, in Dublin, and in the Isle of Wight. This seems to have been attempted when possible. In 986 the diocese of Rochester was ravaged, presumably to prevent the Northmen from making use of Sheppey as a station. As the king was only then seventeen years of age, the raid must have been made with Dunstan's consent or under his authority.

In 1000 Ethelred followed[2] Sweyn's ships into the Norman ports, and in the same year he marched north with his forces to Cumbria, his fleet attacking Man and following him along the coast, possibly with an intention of attacking the Norwegians in the Western Isles, but being beaten off by contrary winds. He had very good reason for

[1] *Sed*, query, did they not occupy Bristol, which is not mentioned in the monastic chronicle?

[2] The authorities for this are very questionable, but the fact is probable.

making this raid. The check given to the Northmen in Ireland by the defeat of Glenmama must have sent the roving mercenaries who formed their armies in search of new fields for plunder, and the death of Olaf Trygvasson at Svold had left Sigurd the Stout of the Orkneys free to attack Olaf's ally.

With an inferior force at sea such counter-attacks were rare. To defend the whole line of coast was impossible; the king could only guard the estuaries of the Thames and Severn, thus covering London and Bristol, and keep watch on the border line of Mercia from Chester to London.

Compelled tamely to await attacks which came without notice from the storm and went back into the fog, without any hostile base against which to direct a counter-stroke there would seem from the first to have been no possible end, when the invasion in force was once pushed home, but defeat and conquest. Confused and half-told as is the story of the Chronicle, it would seem as if the numbers of the invaders had been remarkably small, or the defence most stubborn and ably directed, which protracted such a conquest for more than thirty-five years.

So long as Ethelred could isolate the raids to the south coast, where they could be dealt with by a fairly loyal population, he was safe from the evil which came on him in 1013, when Sweyn landed in the Humber, raised all the north, and then attacked Wessex by land.

This invasion is not very interesting and very difficult to follow, but its difficulties are worth more consideration than to be swept to one side by abuse of a king.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FOUR MINORS OF WESSEX— ETHELRED II (978–1016)

Ethelred II, the last of four minors in succession, when he was crowned by Dunstan was a boy of ten years of age. It is the misfortune of such prolonged minorities that, at a time when quick judgment and a habit of quick action on the part of the leaders was essential for any success, both king and people had become accustomed by habits of three reigns to look for consultation of ministers and delegation of authority in the place of independent action by the king.

That Ethelred should have been called the "Unready" in the sense of one who does not listen to counsel passes human comprehension.[1] Before his accession the Witan is seldom mentioned, except in connection with the making of laws,[2] nor is it mentioned in his reign until the year 992, after Dunstan's death, when Ethelred was of age. After this the situation becomes so serious that the king cannot deal with it by the ordinary method of calling out the local militia. The defence becomes a national matter, few measures of defence being mentioned without a consultation of the Witan, with the result that the king and nobles are often consulting and possibly disputing over measures of defence when the leaders would have been executing the result of their deliberations. "All these things befell us

[1] Who was it who first gave him this name?

[2] The preamble of the laws of Alfred states that Alfred commanded the laws to be written, and rejected some by counsel of his Witan: of the laws of Athelstan, that "the laws were made by Athelstan king, with the counsel of Wulfhelm archbishops and of my other bishops": of the laws of Edgar that "this is the ordinance which king Edgar with the counsel of his Witan ordained": of the laws of Ethelred "which king Ethelred and his Witan ordained."

through unwise counsel, that they were not in time offered tribute or fought against; and when they had done the most evil, then peace and truce was made with them" (Saxon Chr. 1011). The chronicler might not be a very good judge of the position of forces and the necessities, when it was time to fight and when to pay tribute; but the passage shows the opinion at the time as to the source of difficulty.

The long supremacy of Dunstan over all other men had minimised in the three preceding reigns the evils of this delegated authority. On his death in 988 a struggle between the nobles for control over the young king must have weakened authority just when it was most wanted. It may have become necessary to balance Scandinavian with English influence by these consultations.

We know nothing whatever of Ethelred's character from any trustworthy contemporary source. The violent abuse of him, which has become a chronic disease with our historians, had its origin in the efforts of the biographers of Dunstan to clear Dunstan's memory from any responsibility for misfortunes which had already happened.

Whether good or bad, when the habit of taking advice is established, it becomes extremely difficult for a young king, when of age, to shake off either his advisers or the habit of taking advice at improper moments, weakening the promptness of exercise of his judgment at moments when prompt action is most required. We have examples of this later on in the reigns of the English kings, Henry III, Richard II, and Henry VI; they were none of them necessarily bad rulers, but were men who, having been under tutors and governors in their early dealings with affairs of State, found it impossible to break with the habit of avoiding responsibility by leaning on and waiting for the advice of others, a habit which no mediæval king could afford safely to contract.

Exertions of authority by such rulers are always fitful and uncertain, violent when they should have been conciliating, and hesitating when prompt slaughter was the

sole remedy. "Woe unto thee, O land, when thy king is a child."

We must not, however, lose sight of one view of this frequent consultation of the Witan. The Witan was not in the first instance a legislative assembly, like our modern Parliaments, but (like Mahon's consultation of his tribal leaders before Sulcoit) a meeting of the executive of war leaders and heads of tribes before action, an army council for deliberation over the immediate affairs of the nation. Any action taken after this was the result of conference and joint decision, when all the expedients that seemed possible had been put before the meeting, and it was taken on the joint responsibility of the whole nation.

That the initiative was not always with the king is shown by the first national collection of Danegelt being made on the advice and by the persuasion of Siric or Sigeric, archbishop of Canterbury, Dunstan's successor. The entry in the Chronicle would rather give the idea that the young king, as was natural to a young man, proposed to fight on, but was overruled by his elders.

His reign is a melancholy record of an unsuccessful struggle, marked by internal distrust and treachery, famine and murrain, so great as sometimes to drive away the invader, and an unremitting series of naval raids by small forces of Scandinavian "shipmen" in all directions, so pointed that the maddened defenders never knew where next they were to prepare for attack. The chronicler, unable as he was in the seclusion of his monastery to draw any well-balanced conclusion from a survey of the whole field of the struggle, yet sums up the position fairly when he says: "When they were eastwards, then were our forces kept westwards; and when they were southwards, then were our forces northwards."[1]

Hemmed in between hostile Wales and Scandinavian powers, the kingdom of Wessex was far more difficult to defend from such raids than the more compact Ireland,

[1] See Introductory Chapter, "The Records of the Times," p. xliii.

which had to meet attacks only from the Orkney earldom or through Man. The very shape of Wessex itself, the long southern seaboard ending in the narrow peninsula of the hostile Cornish Britons, the long, wide estuaries of the Severn and Thames, the two rivers almost meeting by the Wiltshire downs, were very favourable to an invader who could choose his point of attack at his will.

Through Man by the Ribble or the Dee the foes on the west could join hands with those in North Humbria, and through the Humber or the Tees the new allies from Scandinavia with those in Ireland.

Thus the loyalty of Mercia, the advanced post of Wessex to the north, becomes the key to the situation. (*See note at end of chapter.*)

Wales was always hostile and uncertain.

Soon after Ethelred's accession the friendly alliance with Maccus of Man came to an end. His dynasty was replaced by a hostile and far more powerful neighbour. The Norwegians of the Orkneys showed renewed activity. In 982 Sigurd, afterwards earl of the Orkneys, attacked Man, but was bought off. In 986–7 there was a great battle in Man between Godfrey the king of the Sudreys and the Danes. In 987 Godfrey the son of Maccus was defending Man against the Northmen from Dalriada. In 989, after the death of Godfrey, Sigurd took possession of both Man and the Sudreys, bringing all parts to the west of Scotland under the Norwegian earldom of the Orkneys, Meredith of North Wales at the same time paying the Northmen for a peace. About the same time the Norwegians defeated the Scots in a battle near Kinloss, in Moray, north of the Grampians, and advanced so far as to take Elgin and Nairn. In 985 Harold Bluetooth was killed, it is said by his son Sweyn, who had sworn at the funeral feast that he would conquer Wessex. Ethelred's ravaging of the diocese of Rochester in the following year was probably intended to prevent the Danish pirates who cruised off the mouth of the Thames watching for merchant

ships, from getting a foothold in Sheppey, as Canute succeeded in doing after Ethelred's death.[1]

This joining of the western isles with the Orkneys destroyed altogether the balance of power in the isles which had given Wessex peace.

Malcolm, who became king of Scots in 1005, hastened to make peace with the Northmen, giving Sigurd his daughter in marriage.

Brian, after Glenmama, had entered into a close alliance with the Northmen of Irish ports, with a view to the dethronement of Malachi.

Only Wessex stood aloof. Henceforward Ethelred must guard against renewed trouble from the north-west.

Add to this that there was a large slave population in the country which would neither be efficiently armed nor likely to show much fight with the enemy. Of the impossibility of foreseeing engagements at sea I have already spoken.

The Chronicles begin to record the raids on Wessex on a small scale soon after Ethelred's accession, Southampton, Thanet, and Chester being attacked in 980 (Chester by "a northern ship force"), the shores of Devon in 981, and Portland Bill in Dorset in 982. The Welsh tributaries in Cornwall and Wales were raided in 981, but this would not concern Wessex, the weakening of the Welsh being an advantage rather than a danger to the kingdom.

In 991 a much more formidable attack was made on East Anglia by a large force. They were bravely withstood by the East Anglians under Brithnoth, the Scandinavian earl, at Maldon, in a battle which is historic in so far that it inspired an early epic poem. The Northmen won the day and Brithnoth lost his life. According to one version of the Saxon Chronicle, of which the dates are much confused, the leader of the Northmen in this battle of Maldon

[1] As the story about Dunstan paying Ethelred £100 to stop his ravages only appears first in Osbeorn's very late life of Dunstan, the document of penitence twelve years later in Kemble's *Codex Diplomaticus* is probably a forgery. There was so much Danish blood among the higher clergy that the bishop of Rochester may have been a Dane.

was Olaf Trygvasson. This invasion led to the first national collection of Danegelt, a payment to these Northmen as the price of a lasting peace with Wessex, "on the advice," says Florence, "of Siric,[1] archbishop of Canterbury, and the eorldermen, Ethelward and Elfric."

As I have pointed out previously, this "buying of a peace," which gave time to prepare measures of defence, was new only in this, that it was not local, but made for the first time by the king and Witan on behalf of all Wessex, and that it was provided for by a general tax on land, the first tax of which we have any record. How this tax was collected, its amount, or what was the system of land valuation we can only guess. Probably the earls and sheriffs of counties made the payments for their people, and kept a handsome commission on the amount paid in. Any particulars either of collection or of distribution would be quite unknown to the chroniclers, whose estimate would be either guesswork or gossip from irresponsible sources. The greater part of the tax must have been paid always in produce or labour.

The tax must have fallen heavily on the religious foundations, which had hitherto been exempt from military service, and it must have been confined practically to Wessex and western Mercia, as under the circumstances there could have been no means short of force for obtaining contributions from East Anglia, Wales, or North Humbria.

It is very unlikely that the whole, or even the larger part, of the amount collected was paid to the plundering Danes, as the object of any such levy was to make preparations in the breathing time gained for measures of national defence, and the levies were generally followed by the collection of a temporary fleet and offensive measures.

The respite in this case was used to collect a fleet at London to "entrap the army" into some bay or river where they might be surrounded and dealt with by both land and

[1] Or Sigeric. A learned archbishop who travelled to Rome and has left us his itinerary. It is supposed that the Anglo-Saxon Cottoniana map was made by an Irish monk in his household.

sea forces. But the plan was given away to the Northmen by Elfric, the eorlderman of Mercia, who with two bishops and an earl had command of the fleet. This Elfric had been "banished the land" for some cause in 985 and had fled to Denmark. He now deserted to the enemy with his ship, warning them of the attack. As a consequence only one ship was captured by the king's fleet, but the rest of the enemy met the Londoners and East Saxons in their flight, and were beaten off with loss, Elfric's ship being taken as he escaped from it.

In the next year we have one of the few notices of doings in North Humbria. Beaten off in Wessex, the Northmen, whoever they were, for we never know if it was the same force, went up to North Humbria, stormed and plundered Bamborough, and then sailed to the mouth of the Humber. Here the North Humbrian forces met them, but the leaders, men with Scandinavian names, began the flight. The chronicler says nothing further,[1] nor is there any further mention of North Humbria until Sweyn enters Wessex from the north.

NOTE.—Mercia, south-west of Watling Street—that is to say, all the Midlands north of the Avon and the Thames, and south of a line drawn from Chester to London by way of Bedford and the Lea—would seem to be the only part of the island which was actually incorporated with Wessex in the advance by Alfred's successors which followed his treaties with the Danes giving this territory to him. However independent it may have been under the great Ethelfleda, it seems certain that at her death it was annexed to Wessex, and that although still a separate earldom it did not enjoy that independence which even in the reign of Henry VIII rendered North Humbria, governed by half-regal earls, formidable in revolt. How far such annexation carried any power of levying money or of altering legal custom we have no knowledge, but it almost certainly gave Wessex the right to call out the Mercian levies on the same terms as those of Wessex, and to call on the frontier towns to fortify for defence.

So long as the earls of Mercia can be trusted to keep Wales in check, to secure Chester and the mouth of the Severn, and to present a solid front to the Northmen of North Humbria, the kingdom was free to unite its forces against the attacks from Scandinavia on London and the south. It is Mercia in Ethelred's reign which answers to Leinster in Ireland, and

[1] It is not likely that in his monastery at Peterborough or Worcester he knew anything of what was passing in North Humbria.

it is the repeated change of sides of the earls of Mercia which paralyse all the plans of the Wessex king.

It should be noticed that during the whole of this reign it is very exceptional to hear of a raid on North Humbria. Either Ethelred contented himself with holding the line north of Mercia with such men as he could keep in the field (which would agree with the mention of "all the army north of Watling Street," which submitted to Sweyn in 1013), or there is a lack of mention because North Humbria, friendly to the Northmen, was not raided. The raid on Cumbria in 1000 would be easier if an army was stationed along this line of Watling Street, and the levies could be drawn from this instead of from the ploughmen of Wessex.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CONQUEST OF WESSEX

I. Sweyn and Olaf Trygvasson

From this time the invasion took a form which no partial victory could check. In 994, Sweyn, king of Denmark, who in 993 had entered North Wales from Man, and Olaf Trygvasson, afterwards the famous king of Norway, who had been living in England and Ireland leading plundering expeditions to the Hebrides, Man, and the west coast of Scotland, came in person with large fleets (ninety-four ships) for conquest, sailed up the Thames, and attacked London.

The brave city, itself largely peopled with Scandinavian merchants (who had there their own churches, markets, and law courts) repelled the pagans. The two kings then scoured the coast of Essex and the south coast from the mouth of the Thames to Southampton, and, landing, procured horses for an expedition inland. Ethelred and his Witan adopted the policy which from that time forward was becoming very usual in dealing with small mobile bodies of men in armour, now that the art of fortification was beginning to be understood. Henry II and his sons treat the raids on Normandy by the kings of France in the same way, and by it the kings of France nullify the effects of the brilliant victories of Edward III and his son in the fourteenth century.

They let the enemy waste themselves, galloping over the country, trusting to the alarmed inhabitants to secrete their valuables and to drive off their cattle, starving out the invader, while they themselves held the fortified towns. The

silence of the Chronicles as to the great towns is very remarkable. London is attacked, but never taken except by Ethelred and Olaf the Saint; Southampton is mentioned as being plundered, Oxford as being burnt; but Winchester, after its sack in 860, is never mentioned. Bristol, the great seaport and Irish market, is never mentioned at all. The five Danish burghs are only mentioned when Sweyn conquers.

When the raiders had worn themselves out, they were bought off and victualled at Southampton "from all the realm of the West Saxons." Ethelred and his advisers were here able to divide the enemy, making a special treaty of commerce with Olaf, who now became a real convert to Christianity, and became Ethelred's ally, Ethelred standing as his godfather at his baptism at Andover.[1] This baptism of Olaf was the second step in the conversion of Scandinavia from England. From this time forth he used his battleaxe only too faithfully in the service of his new religion. The value of the trade with Norway, and the difficulty of separating trade from plunder is shown by stipulations on the part of Olaf for privileges for Norse ships in English harbours.

Olaf proved a poor ally to Ethelred. He went in the next year (995) to Norway, and conquered it. But he made many enemies, and his new form of faith was unpopular, as were his drastic methods of enforcing it. He had incurred the enmity of Sweyn by his change, the more so as Norway had lately been rather subordinate to Denmark. Sweyn put his conquest of England to one side to carry on an active campaign against Olaf. From 997 to 1000, when Olaf was overthrown and drowned at the battle of Svold, Sweyn was fighting him in the Baltic.

But in 998–9 some "pagan army" from the west ravaged along the south coast of England from Cornwall to Kent, making the Isle of Wight its headquarters, and attacking Rochester and the estuaries of the Thames and Medway. The local forces met it several times with no

[1] See Appendix B, "Prime Signing."

success, as without an effective national fleet the English could only watch their foes from the land and speculate as to the point of attack. In the night, or under cover of a fog, the Northmen could move to a fresh spot, land, and attack a near town or raid the country.

Then Ethelred called out the national militia in the form of both army and fleet to attack them, but they were too mobile to be entrapped by his forces.

This time the chronicler from his cloister has a different complaint to make; instead of "when they were eastwards, then were our forces kept westwards," it is now, "but when the ships were ready then the miserable crew delayed from day to day, and distressed the poor people who lay in the ships." Florence of Worcester interprets the "miserable crew" as "the generals of the army." "In the end," he says, "these expeditions by sea and land effected nothing, except the people's distress and waste of money, and the emboldening of their foes." The chronicler, whether in Peterborough or Fleet Street, is always hard to please when a campaign is going on.

In the year 1000 the "pagan army" left the island and carried their ships into the ports of Normandy. According to a somewhat untrustworthy authority, Ethelred followed them with his fleet. It is certain that he and Richard of Normandy were on bad terms and were reconciled by Pope John XV in 991, making a treaty not to harbour fugitives. Secure on that side he took advantage of the respite to make a great raid on Cumbria both by sea and land. He was followed along the coast by a fleet, which, beaten back by the winds from the shores of Cumbria, ravaged Man.[1]

The conquest of Man and the Sudreys by Sigurd, earl of the Orkneys, and the successes of the Norwegians in Moray, combined with the victory at Glenmama, which would tend to throw the defeated Norwegians on North Humbria, moved Ethelred to prevent a junction of Norse forces which might have been fatal to Wessex. The raid on Cumbria at

[1] Or Anglesey?

this juncture shows that it was from the west that trouble was expected.

It should be noticed that no adverse comment is made by the chronicler on this action, which would have been idle bravado if there had not been serious danger from the north-west. It does not appear that at any time during Ethelred's reign his men refused to follow him, even on such a campaign as this, or showed any want of confidence in his leading.

As there was a temporary lull in the south, it would seem to have been good policy that Ethelred should take the opportunity to break up a combination which he probably saw in the making, but which the chronicler of the twelfth or nineteenth century did not necessarily see. As a matter of fact, whether this raid had any effect or not, the North would seem to have been remarkably quiet until 1013, the blows which beat down Wessex coming from another quarter.

In the next year the raids continued in Devon and Hampshire, met by local forces, which, though often beaten, made sufficient resistance to prevent the raid going far inland. In this year is an entry which is very significant of the conditions of this warfare. Undoubtedly one result of Ethelred's treaty with Sweyn and Olaf had been that many Northmen had entered Ethelred's service and had settled in Wessex. One of these men, who had been "gifted with houses and with gold and silver," Pallig, a Northman, the husband of Sweyn's sister, who had been living in Wessex in Ethelred's pay, changed sides at a critical moment, and joined the invaders "with the ships which he could gather."

Ethelred in 1002 made an alliance with Normandy by marrying Richard's sister Emma. Although we hear of no actual assistance being given to Wessex, the alliance would be very valuable if it secured only the active neutrality which would make it dangerous for the Danish ships to carry their cargoes into Norman harbours. This, however, as we know from eighteenth century story, is a great deal

to ask from a neutral. But we never hear of Norman ships joining the Danes in their invasions.

If we are to believe the chronicler, whose statement is palpably false,[1] all fight had gone out of the country.

Peace was now made with them as before, probably on the basis of taking into the king's service a great part of the invading forces.

But the device of paying off the enemy had lost for Wessex all the little value it ever had as giving a breathing space. France and Ireland had ceased to be available as alternative places for plunder, and Wales and Scotland were too poor to offer much attraction. All around Wessex were Norse settlements, ready for a convenient moment for a fresh attack, while Sweyn negotiated with them all, or brought fresh forces from Scandinavia.

In this same year occurred what has been called the Massacre of St. Brice. Ethelred had notice of a conspiracy of the Northmen against himself and the Witan. Nothing could be more likely; nor does the Chronicle speak as if there was the slightest doubt of the fact; it was in agreement with the past record of the Northmen since their first appearance; that they thought it worth while to conspire against the king negatives the assumption of his incompetence. Ethelred gave orders for a general slaughter of those plunderers who were staying in the country after the peace spending their plunder, a just precaution if the statement of the chronicler is true.

But violent measures had no effect in stopping the stream of invaders.

In 1003, Sweyn, who after Olaf's death had divided Norway with the king of Sweden and the sons of Hakon jarl, came back ready for conquest with fresh ships and money.

He invaded Wiltshire, and was met by a large force under the eorlderman Elfric. But Elfric, either desiring

[1] "Nor any fleet at sea durst meet them; nor land force either, went they ever so far up." A.S. Chron.: see operations of 1003 *et seq.*, pp. 177–9.

to draw Sweyn from the sea[1] or unwilling to risk a defeat which would open all Mercia to the enemy, or, as the chronicler suggests, from motives of treachery, avoided battle, and Sweyn, after some plundering, went back to his ships, which had followed him along the coast. It is very clear that his forces were very small, and his plundering very casual that he made no further effort at attack but retired.

In 1004 he turned his attention again to East Anglia, and sacked Norwich, evidently finding the south coast too well guarded. The East Anglian earl Ulfcytel (a Scandinavian) and his Witan offered to "purchase peace of the army, because they had come unawares and he had not time that he might gather his forces." But during the truce, the pagans left their ships and went up to attack Thetford, which they burned. Ulfcytel had ordered the destruction of their ships in their absence, but his orders were not carried out; as they returned they were met by him with part of the East Anglian forces and an obstinate fight took place, the natives being hardly defeated. If Sweyn thought that he could turn the flank of Wessex by entering through East Anglia he found that he had met his match.

But in the next year an enemy arrived that was too much even for Sweyn, who retired to Denmark with his ships to

[1] The author is no military critic, but would like to make a suggestion. The Northmen as far as possible avoided pitched battles, and kept in close touch with their fleets in case they were forced to retire. Under such conditions it would be the best policy by feigned retreat to draw them inland as far as possible, so that they could be dealt with by forces collected from the surrounding country, away from their ships. Such retreat related by hearsay would very naturally be looked upon by the chronicler as treachery. Though the changing of sides went on freely, there would not seem in this case to be a good ground for the accusation. There is another very good reason for this action on the part of the Wessex kings. The only great difficulty which troubled the Norse invader was a possible scarcity of ammunition. Close to the iron mines of Sweden, he could quickly replace his shot-away arrows and lost spear-heads. Away from his base in Britain he had to depend, to a great extent, on stones. A large supply of stones was accordingly carried for the fighting ships in subordinate vessels. If the Saxon could inveigle the Northman far enough inland from his ships to ensure that he shall have exhausted his ammunition and be unable to replenish it from his base, he would have the raider greatly at his mercy. It is extremely likely that some of the retreats so condemned by the Monk of Peterborough could be explained by this very necessary strategy.

recruit his forces. "In this year was the great famine throughout the English nation; such that no man ever before recollected one so grim."

Sweyn was back again next year, attacking the coast of Kent and plundering and destroying. Ethelred called out "all the people of Wessex and Mercia," who lay out all the harvest in the field against the enemy, "but it availed nothing the more than it before had done." The few well-armed men passed where they wished among the crowds of labouring folk, ill-armed, ill-clad, and suffering from famine, and when winter came they retired to their rendezvous in the Isle of Wight, and lived on the country around them.

Sweyn now made another determined effort to break through from the south to the Mercian line. Like Murketagh of the Leather Cloaks, in the dead of winter, when Ethelred and his Witan had gone into Shropshire to watch the boundaries of Mercia, Sweyn and his men broke into Hampshire and so into Berkshire. Here they were met by local forces which they defeated, but on being opposed they returned to their ships with their plunder. The raid had the effect of bringing about a fresh peace and a fresh tribute, after which Sweyn appears to have left the country until 1013. A new eorlderman, Edric, was appointed over the kingdom of Mercia, but whether in place of Elfric or on his death does not appear.

The king took advantage of the interval of peace to build a new fleet, the land being taxed at the rate of one vessel for three hundred and ten hides and a helmet and coat of mail for eight hides. It would appear that this tax was willingly borne. The ships were all brought to Sandwich and lay off the coast in anticipation of a new attack from a fleet under one Thurkill from Flanders.

[1] *The Northmen's ships and mode of fighting.*—The following is the description of the Northmen's ships and mode of fighting given by Sir G. W. Dasent in the preface to vol. iii. of the *Orkneyinga Saga*, p. lvii. note :—

"Vessels with one mast and one sail of a long shape; they must also have carried a jib or foresail. Aft there seems to have been a half deck on which was a poop, where the cabin of the captain was. In the waist

II. Canute and Olaf the Saint

The elements now come into play. Wulfnoth, a South Saxon, the father of Godwin the earl [1] afterwards so famous, deserted, and went plundering round the coast with twenty ships, and Brihtric, Edric's brother, followed with eighty ships to take him. But a great storm came up which wrecked Brihtric's ships, and we are not surprised to hear that the great fleet found it safer to seek the shelter of the Thames than to ride out by the Goodwin Sands.[2] The same wind which drove the Saxon ships to the Thames apparently blew Thurkill's fleet over to Sandwich, where the people of East Kent hasten to purchase a peace for themselves for £3000.

they were undecked, and here on benches sat the rowers, two on a bench. The forepart of the ship . . . too was decked, and under the deck in what would now be called the forecastle, some of the crew were lodged at night. The rest found shelter under the awnings with which the ships of the Northmen seem always to have been covered at night when strife was not looked for."

Warships long and narrow.—On the forecastle "stood in action the picked men of the crew." As the waists were low, the sides were raised "before action by temporary bulwarks. At other times the waist of the ship was decorated with the shields of the crew. One hundred and twenty men was no unusual number for a long ship to carry."

"It seems to have been an invariable practice when Northmen fought against Northmen that the attacking side rode up to their adversaries, who awaited them, having first lashed their ships together in line. As soon as the attacking ships came close enough to begin the action, they too were lashed together, and after a struggle which lasted some time with missiles, in which stones were largely and constantly employed, the two lines closed together by the action of wind or tide, and then when the decks of either side had been sufficiently cleared to allow them to board, those who had the best of it boarded, and cleared the enemy's deck by a struggle hand to hand." When they had cleared that ship "the conquerors passed on from her to the next ship in the enemy's line."

When the one side had so much the best of it that it was clear that the day was won, the beaten side cut away the lashings and fled as they could, the victorious side cutting loose in the same way to pursue.

In the account of a battle (1044–45) between Magnus the Good of Norway and Sweyn Estridson afterwards king of Denmark at Aarhaus in Jutland it is said, after the ships had closed for battle, "they fought at the bows, so that the men only at the bows could strike; the men in the forecastle thrust with spears; and all who were further off shot with light spears or javelins or war arrows. Some fought with stones or short stakes; and those who were aft of the mast shot with bow."

[1] The Chronicle here is not contemporary, or there is an interpolation, as Wulfnoth is described as the "father of Godwin the earl."

[2] The reader should compare Mr. Freeman's account of these events in the *Norman Conquest*, where an entirely different view is taken.

The Northmen then plundered Sussex and Hampshire on their way to the Isle of Wight, from which they ravaged the country around. Ethelred called out his militia, and for once got between the Northmen and the sea. But for some reason (through Edric, the chronicler says) an engagement did not result. The Northmen went back into Kent and wintered on the Thames, making efforts to take London, which would have given them the command of all East Wessex. But they were unsuccessful. The staunchness of London, its importance as a seaport and as a centre of commerce, and its loyalty to Ethelred in all his difficulties is a marked feature of the conflict.

From the banks of the Thames, "after midwinter," they raided and burnt Oxford, retreating to their ships when they heard of forces gathering against them. In the next year they sailed round to East Anglia, where Ulfcytel made again a brave but unsuccessful resistance, the enemy for months overawing the whole fen country and the borders of Mercia. The difficulty of keeping the English militia in the field is shown by the saying of the chronicler that when the enemy "went to their ships, then ought the forces again to have gone out against them until they should land: but then the forces went home." It was a war between a standing army clad in armour and militia called out for a set term, who went home as soon as the enemy went on board ship.

The hopelessness of the struggle had become so evident, that when the Witan was summoned, "although something might then be counselled, it did not stand even one month; at last there was no chief who would assemble forces, but each fled as he best might; nor at the last would even one shire assist another." How much of this was local to the monk of Ely or Peterborough, or how far it represented the condition of the kingdom at large, we are unable to say. If it had been true, it would not have taken six years more to complete the conquest.

The king and his Witan in London made one more effort to buy off the invaders, paying for a peace, and

taking forty-five ships into their service. The peace was so far effective that the Northmen afterwards carried out their part as Ethelred's mercenaries. But in the interval between the negotiations and the completion, they continued their plundering. They got possession of Canterbury through treachery, and held Alphege (Ælfheah), the archbishop, prisoner, trying to obtain more money through him.

Failing in this, they called him before them at a banquet held at their husting, and after they had drunk deeply of the wine of Gascony, which was one of London's chief imports, revenged themselves for their disappointment by throwing at him bones and horns of the oxen they had been eating, until at last some friendly Viking struck him down with an axe.

No sooner had this horde of Northmen been disposed of, than Sweyn once more appeared with his forces off Sandwich. He went north up the Humber and up the Trent to Gainsborough. He received the submission of North Humbria, of the five boroughs, "and soon after all the army north of Watling Street," presumably Ethelred's army which lay along the north line of Mercia, facing North Humbria. If this is so, that Ethelred was compelled to keep a permanent force to impress his control upon this border (and it would seem to be consistent with affairs in Ireland, Man, and Norway), it would account for a great deal of the difficulties with the eorlderman of Mercia, and for the apparent weakness of the defence of the south coast.

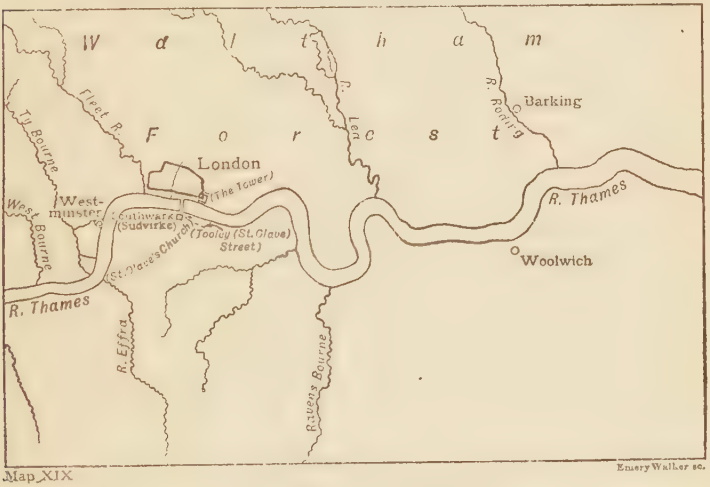
Sweyn now left the hostages which he had taken from the tribes which had submitted with his son Canute,[1] and went over the border to Bath in Wessex, where the people made submission to him, delivering hostages. All Wessex submitted, except the Londoners. with whom were Ethelred and Thurkill's fleet.

[1] The spelling Canute has been used because it has been in literary use, and it is not possible to say either Knut, Knit, or Knot without putting in the "a" vowel sound when the "K" is sounded.

In the end, seeing the hopelessness of the struggle, London submitted. Ethelred, with his wife Emma and his two sons, Edward (afterwards the Confessor), and Alfred (afterwards killed by Canute's son Harold and Godwin), went over to Normandy.

But Sweyn died in 1014, "and all the fleet chose Canute for king." Thereupon "all the Witan who were in England, clergy, and laity," in spite of Canute and his ships, sent for Ethelred.

But how was Ethelred to win London? The famous



LONDON AND SOUTHWARK

bridge, which had proved a fatal obstacle to every invader, had to be taken or avoided. According to the Scandinavian story, it was Olaf the Saint who overcame this difficulty. He had been fighting for King Ethelred, had become a Christian, and had followed him to Normandy when all was lost. Now he came back with him to London.

The bridge was built on arches of wood, on piles, or huge posts, trees driven into the river, fastened through a cap above, and the outer ones sloped outwards; it was so broad that two waggons could pass one another over it; it was protected by turrets and overhanging ramparts which com-

manded the river. The defenders from these points of vantage threw down missiles, and used weapons to destroy any ships trying to pass the bridge.

On the south bank of the river, in the great trading place of Southwark, the Danes had raised a great work, had dug large ditches, and within had built a bulwark of stone, timber, and turf, where they had stationed a strong army.

Olaf and his men went up to the bridge on rafts and boats, protected by shields made of wood taken from old houses and tied with hazel bands, the wood and withies so cut as to make a wicker house overhanging the ship, the whole supported by posts put beneath, so high that it was easy to fight under them. The covering was intended to be proof against the stones thrown down upon it.

The fire from the bridge was so hot that most of the boats were driven off. But Olaf succeeded in fastening his raft to the piles with ropes. Then the other boats joined to assist him, and, rowing down the river, they pulled the bridge, crowded with people and weapons, down with them.[1] Then they took Southwark.

Canute went north to Gainsborough, and made a pact with the people of Lincolnshire to go on a joint plundering expedition.

Ethelred marched north at once, came upon them with his forces before they were ready, drove Canute to his ships, and taught the would-be Vikings of Lincolnshire a salutary lesson, while Olaf won battles for him in East Anglia and in the Isle of Wight, and helped to take Canterbury.

Canute sailed south to Sandwich. There he put on shore the hostages given to his father, after he had cut off their hands, ears, and noses, and then went along the south coast plundering.

This war of plunder and ravage now stretched itself over all England, Edmund (called Ironside), Ethelred's son,

[1] See Appendix C, "The Fall of London Bridge."

raising forces in the north, and Canute plundering the south coast.

Ethelred, who was near his end, lay sick in Hampshire; but, in 1016, he was called upon to join with the London levies the forces which Edmund had gathered. They tell him that they will not fight without him, but he learns that he will be betrayed by some of them, and leaving the levies he returns to London. Edmund joins Uhtred, the earl of North Humbria, and marches into Shropshire and the west, while Canute plunders the Midlands. Then Canute goes north, kills Uhtred, and appoints a new earl, Eric, a Northman; and Edmund joins his father in London, where Ethelred dies at Easter 1016.

He must have been about forty-seven, a man prematurely worn out by the long struggle. "He held his kingdom," says the chronicler, "with great toil and under great difficulties the while his life lasted." That is all. Not one word of blame is laid upon him by his contemporaries. The abuse which has been showered on him by later writers, and repeated *ad nauseam* in the history books of the nineteenth century, until his name has become a synonym for incompetence and wickedness, only begins with monastic chroniclers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, who, like Mr. Freeman and others, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, filled in the gaps of the Saxon Chronicle with abuse of the last Saxon king.

Olaf the Saint, who had stood by his godfather both in failure and success, had left in 1015 for Norway.

The Witan elected Edmund as king, and Canute besieged London without success, though he dug a great ditch on the south side to get round the bridge and invest the city on all sides. Edmund meanwhile over-ran Wessex, and fought two battles without much result. Then he relieved London, driving Canute's ships away. But as he had no fleet with which to fight at sea, as soon as his back was turned in Wessex, the city was again invested. Canute now went to Mercia, where he would be assisted

by Edric, who had joined him, and Edmund, after defeating a force of Danes in Kent and driving them into Sheppey, followed him. Edric now changed sides again, bringing the men of Mercia, who had evidently the balance of fighting power, over to Edmund's side.

The armies met at Assandun in Essex, Edric began flight with his Mercian troops, and the English were hopelessly defeated, a great number of the nobles being killed.

The two kings made a peace, Canute to have Mercia and Edmund Wessex. London bought peace from the army, who brought their ships into the Thames. In the same year Edmund died, probably murdered by Edric, and Canute became peaceably sole king of England. It is satisfactory to hear that he had Edric killed in the following year.

III. The Scandinavian Peace

Here end, so far as England is concerned, these invasions from Scandinavia. The lesson to be learnt from them is plain. No sailing of fleets about the island awaiting attack will repel an invader.

If in later years Harold had been able to cross over and attack William in Normandy, we might have been spared the benefits which the Norman Conquest brought to us; if Drake had not circumnavigated the globe by way of Peru, and had not singed the king of Spain's beard in Cadiz, the story of the Armada might have been differently told; if Blake had not risked Santa Cruz, if Anson and Hawke had not beaten the French in their own waters, if Pitt had not sent the expedition so generally condemned by English historians to Rochefort in the Seven Years' War, if Nelson with an inferior force had not sought the French in the Baltic, in Egypt, in the East Indies, wherever he could find them, we might now be part of a Spanish Empire or a French Republic.

The nation which awaits attack from without or counts the prows of its ships for victory, is lost.

Canute sent for Emma from Normandy, and married her. She served as an additional title to the English throne, and as such was of value to him.

His long reign brought the peace which the whole country so badly needed. As king of Denmark he could check Norse invasion. He became a devoted and magnificent son of the Church. He was content to extract tribute from the English, and to make use of English fighters in his wars in Norway and Denmark.

When, after Ethelred's death, Olaf the Saint went to Norway, he swept away the triple alliance, and captured that fickle country. That done, he set to work in the most thorough fashion to enforce Christianity by fire, sword, and torture. Canute worked against him with help of men and money to all discontented chiefs, as his father had worked against Olaf Trygvasson. Taking advantage of Olaf's growing unpopularity, Canute in 1027 made the counter-stroke from Britain against Scandinavia which had been impossible to Ethelred of Wessex. He brought fifty ships full of English thanes to the Baltic. But he did not succeed at once. Olaf came within an ace of destroying his fleet at Lymfiord in Jutland when Canute was hiding in wait for him in a small bay, by opening an inland lake and letting the waters down on Canute's ships as he attacked him. Canute was saved by the promptness of Ulf earl of Denmark, who had married his sister Astrid. He had Ulf murdered a little later. Ulf's sister Gytha married Earl Godwin of Wessex, and was the mother of Harold, who fell at Hastings.

In 1030 Olaf the Saint fell in a battle on land against his own people. Then Canute became king of Norway, as well as of England, including North Humbria, and of Denmark, and a titular overlord of the Orkneys and their Scottish possessions. As king of these countries he could increase very largely the trade between them and stop the piracy which disturbed the trade. It speaks very strongly for the loyalty of the Saxons, especially of London, to their king, and to their affection for him, and very

highly for his character, that with these advantages from a Scandinavian king before their eyes they held so long to the side of Ethelred II.

The position of London with respect to these wars is a very peculiar one. Undoubtedly the city was then, as now, very cosmopolitan in character, peopled with Danes and Norwegians, Flemings and French, and Romans. It is a characteristic of commerce that it has no country, no loyalty to any special land or place, except that it seeks security and order as necessary for its transactions. We and the Northern peoples (like the Italian republicans in the thirteenth century) owe what we call our liberties much more to our being a trading people to whom order and certainty of conditions are a necessity than to inherent love of liberty in the race. The men of London would certainly not feel any such love for Wessex as would keep them on the side of Ethelred, unless there was in Ethelred himself some quality which guaranteed security of trade. It may have been this very necessity of not hampering trade which augmented the difficulty of dealing sharply with the Northmen.

Here we must leave Canute and England to turn once more to other parts of the islands.

CHAPTER XV

THE GROWTH OF SCOTLAND

THE records of Scotia during this time are very scanty, but none the less important.

In 1005 Malcolm became king—a king who gained more by shrewd diplomacy than others did by exhausting wars. He strengthened himself by alliance both with the Norwegians and the Welsh of the west to enable him to take advantage at any moment of the disturbed state of North Humbria.[1]

Malcolm's action must have been keenly watched by Wessex. An alliance with him, if he could be trusted not to seize on Lothian, would be most valuable, as the fear of invasion from the north would check any disposition of the North Humbrian earl to join the Northmen in an attack on Wessex. But Malcolm was not to be trusted to keep his hands off this part of modern Scotland. The great plains of the Lothians must always have been tempting to the ruler of the Highlands.

Malcolm's alliances had far-reaching effects. Shortly before his accession, Sigurd, the earl of the Orkneys, who was afterwards killed at Clontarf, had shown his power for offence by invading Moray, and taking possession of Elgin and Nairn after defeating the marmoer, or earl, at Kinloss.

In reply, Malcolm secured his frontiers to the north by marrying his younger daughter to Sigurd, and to the west by marrying his elder daughter to a powerful chief Crinan, the lay abbot of Dunkeld.

As a result of these marriages, Sigurd had a son, Thorfinn, and Crinan a son, Duncan, afterwards killed by

[1] North Humbria included all the east up to the Forth.

Macbeth. Duncan became king of the Strathclyde Britons, and afterwards, on Malcolm's death, of Scotia. Thorfinn, after his father's death at Clontarf, was left in Malcolm's care, and by him was made earl of Sutherland and Caithness. He succeeded his half-brothers by Sigurd's first wife as earl of the Orkneys, ruling over these with Caithness,

FROM THE HUMBER TO THE FORTH.

the Sudreys, and Man, and nine earldoms of the Scots king, thus becoming a very powerful Norse ruler as well as Scots earl.

Secured on the north and west, Malcolm was able to act in North Humbria.

In 1006, the year after the great famine in England, Malcolm led a raid into North Humbria. He was met and defeated by the North Humbrian earl at Durham with heavy loss, and was driven back to Scotland. The North

Humbrians cut off the heads of the best-looking of the dead Scots, and paid women to wash and braid the hair. Then the heads were hung up on the walls of Durham as a trophy of victory, and as a warning against future raids.

But in 1018 Malcolm had his revenge. With the assistance of Eugenius, the king of the Strathclyde Britons, he made another expedition into North Humbria, and fought another battle at Carham, on the Tweed, in which he gained a complete victory. After this there is a division of North Humbria, the part north of the Tweed, now called Lothian, passing to the king of Scotland, in whose hands it has since remained, while the southern part, from the Tweed to the Humber, remained in the hands of the North Humbrian earls.

Why this division should have been made, and how far it was matter of treaty between Scotia and North Humbria, is unknown, as no writers at or near the time mention the change. As we are told in the Saxon Chronicle (1017) that Canute appointed Eric earl of North Humbria, Eric may have been in alliance with Malcolm against the former earl, and the division may have been an arrangement between them for Malcolm's assistance. Canute, who had just succeeded in obtaining Wessex, was far too uncertain of his position in that country, and far too busy with his affairs in Denmark and Norway, to trouble himself about disputes between the earls of North Humbria and the Scots. If the tradition is true that he had been sent by Sweyn to Aberdeenshire in 1012, and had met with a great defeat, he would be less likely to interfere now. When it was worth his while in 1031, when he came back from Rome and had thoroughly subdued Norway, he went to Scotland and received the submission of the then Malcolm[1] ("but that he held only a little while," Sax. Chron.), of Macbeth, who ruled Moray and Ross, and of Inchmere, ruler of Argyle, the ancestor of the Lords of the Isles.

Very shortly after this battle of Carham, Duncan, Malcolm's grandson, succeeded to the kingdom of the

[1] See pp. 111–112.

Strathclyde Britons, and in 1034, on the death of Malcolm, to Scotia, thus bringing all the Lowlands and the north-west of England to Chester under the Scottish crown. From this time we may call North Britain Scotland. The only parts of modern Scotland not then subject to Duncan were all the western islands with the control of the mainland adjoining, and all north of what is now the Caledonian Canal, which was still in the hands of the earls of Orkney and the kings of Norway. More than two hundred years passed before the kings of Scotland finally acquired the whole.

The alliance of Malcolm with the earls of Orkney tended to weaken the hold of the kings of Norway on the western islands, which, after Christianity had been accepted, ceased to be of value as winter quarters for piracy.

CHAPTER XVI

THE DEFENCE OF IRELAND.—FROM GLENMAMA TO CLONTARF (1000–1014)

We left Ireland resting for the moment after the decisive victory of Brian and Malachi over the Northmen at Glenmama and the subsequent sack of Dublin. This victory, by leaving Brian no further outlet for his energies against the Northmen, led him to turn his arms once more against Malachi for the supremacy.

He allied himself with the Northmen of Dublin, and with Leinster by taking over as wife Gormlaith, or Kormlada, the sister of Mailmora, king of Leinster. This remarkable woman had been married to Olaf Cuaran, king of the Dublin Danes. She is described in the Annals as very talented, but bringing trouble to any person with whom she was connected, for which, as a connection with her was only looked upon as a convenient means for making trouble, she could hardly be blamed. After the battle of Tara, Olaf Cuaran had retired to the monastery of Iona, where he soon after died. On his death Gormlaith was married to Malachi. He after a time had cast her off, and then Brian married her, giving his own daughter in marriage to her son, Sitric, the Norse king of Dublin, and allying himself with her brother, Mailmora, the king of Leinster, who had been captured after Glenmama hid in a yew tree.

Thus strengthened, Brian invaded Meath, Malachi's own territory, and advanced to Tara with a strong force of tribes of the south, challenging Malachi to fight him or to acknowledge his supremacy.

What follows illustrates very clearly the weakness of the tribal overlord.

Malachi went to Ulster to inquire if the tribes of the Northern Hy Neill would join him in resisting Brian. The chief of the Hy Neill consulted his tribe, and they refused. Malachi had given away to the Irish of Munster one-half of the supremacy which for six hundred years had rested with the Hy Neill, without their concurrence, and they declined to help him to retain the other half.

Then Malachi rode into Brian's camp with a few followers and submitted, while he let Brian clearly understand that he would have fought for it if he had been able to do so.

Nothing further happened. Brian treated Malachi with respect, and Malachi did his duty as a subject king. In the ordinary course Malachi, when the opportunity arose to attack Brian, would, after a bitter civil war, have recovered the supremacy with the assistance of the men of the north. But Malachi made no such attempt. He was either what is called a weak ruler, a supposition which would seem to be negatived by his actions both before and after Glenmama, or he was one of those abnormal men whose only weakness lies in being able to grasp ideas in advance of his time.

An attack on Brian, even if successful, would have invited reprisals, would have weakened resistance to the invader, and would have made perpetual the condition of internal war, out of which the keenest intellects in Europe under the influence of Rome were then trying to struggle. It is possible that in this island of saints Malachi really did rise above the humanity of his time to embrace and act on higher principles, which were inconsistent with the "practical politics" of his time. At any rate, his loyalty to Brian is one of the most remarkable incidents in a remarkable story.

After this there was comparative rest in Ireland for twelve years. Brian made the usual circuits of Ireland, enforcing his supremacy, conciliating the Church, and living upon the country. Peace made it possible for him to bring about improvements of the internal conditions; he built bridges, made roads, and regulated justice. This short period is represented by the annalists as one of unexampled

prosperity; that such a condition was possible, was due to the self-control and loyalty of Malachi no less than to the brilliant administration of Brian.

Such a peace could only be temporary. The same causes which were working to destroy the Saxon dynasty in Wessex operated to bring about a supreme effort of the Northmen to conquer Ireland also.

When the peace was broken, it came from a very small incident. Mailmora, king of Leinster, was bringing to Brian three pine trees for masts of ships. On passing through a bog a quarrel arose among the bearers as to precedence in a narrow path. To settle the matter Mailmora put his shoulder under one of the trees, and in doing so tore a silver button off his coat, a coat which had been given to him by Brian when Mailmora had paid his homage. On arrival at Kincora, Mailmora took the coat to his sister Gormlaith, to ask her to replace the button. But she threw the coat in the fire, and reproached him bitterly with ever having submitted to Brian.

On the same evening insulting words passed between Mailmora and Murrogh, Brian's son. Murrogh was playing a game of chess; Mailmora, looking on, offered some advice as to a move; Murrogh replied by a taunt reminding Mailmora how he had been found hid in a yew tree after Glenmama. Mailmora left the palace on the next morning, and returned home without taking leave, and struck and seriously injured a messenger sent after him to urge his return. On his arrival in Leinster he called his chiefs together for a revolt against Brian's supremacy.

He called upon the Northern Hy Neill, the Hy Carbury in Kildare, and the prince of Brefny for assistance, and allied himself with the Northmen of Dublin and Waterford.

The attack, however, was not made against Munster, but against Malachi in Meath.

Just about the time when Sweyn was making his final invasion of Wessex from the north, the whole force of these allies fell on Meath, forcing Malachi, after making a brave defence, to call on Brian for assistance. In the summer of

1013 Brian entered Leinster, and marched north to blockade Dublin. But the Northmen were well supplied, while Brian ran short of provisions. He was compelled at Christmas-time to raise the siege and return to Munster.

After this both sides collected forces and enlisted allies for what they knew from the events in Wessex must be a final struggle. Ulster held aloof; the Southern Hy Neill under Malachi, some forces from Connaught, and the men of Munster formed Brian's army, with a few allies from Scotland under Donald, the earl or marmoer of Moray.

The levies of Leinster were much more extensive. Their allies the Northmen called for assistance on the men of all the Scandinavian settlements in Britain, and even in Flanders and France, with success.

Sigurd the earl of the Orkneys, Brodar king of Man, and Olaf son of the king of Norway came, with men from the Shetlands, Orkneys, Hebrides, Skye, Galloway, Lewis, Cantyre, and Argyle; men from Cornwall and South Wales; from France, Flanders, Germany, Scandinavia, and North Humbria. There were, we are told, 2000 men in chain armour, an overpowering force against the saffron tunics of the Irish. Also merchants from France, "and Saxons and Britons and Romans."

To both Sigurd and Brodar separately and secretly was promised as the price of their assistance the hand of Gormlaith and the kingship of Dublin.

To meet these levies Brian marched towards Dublin in March 1014, and encamped at Kilmainham, sending Donogh, his young son by Gormlaith, to ravage Leinster on his way.

At daybreak on Good Friday, the 23rd of April 1014, Brian's forces broke up their encampment and marched on Dublin. The Northmen and men of Leinster moved out of Dublin, and, with their backs to the sea, faced Brian's army. Both parties prepared for a Homeric fight.

The tale of the battle that followed at Clontarf was one which rang through Europe. It was no fight in which the fallen knight expected ransom or mercy; the fight was to

the death, the leaders on both sides competing for the post of danger. The battle raged all day from sunrise to sunset, all the prominent men on both sides falling in a series of single combats. If Canute's conquest of Wessex had been hindered by the alliance of Norwegian and Saxon, Clontarf freed him from any fear of help to Wessex from the Norwegian side.

Brian, who was then more than seventy years old, took no part in the fight, spending the day praying in his tent in the rear, and Sitric, king of Dublin, held the fortress of Dublin with his troops in reserve. But apart from these two, nearly every prominent chief, both Scandinavian and Irish, met his death in the field. Among the slain was Sigurd the earl of the Orkneys, and Brian's son Murrogh and grandson Terence or Turlogh. In the confusion which followed the battle, Brodar, the king of Man, reached Brian's tent. He attacked and killed Brian, but not before Brian had given him his death-blow, hewing off both Brodar's legs with a stroke of his axe.

Towards the evening the Northmen broke and fled to their ships. But it was high tide,[1] and the ships were floating out of reach. Malachi, who is accused by the Munster writers of having stood by with his Meath men until evening,[2] now completed the rout by a fierce onslaught on the flying foe, hemming them in between the men of Meath and the sea, so that thousands who escaped the sword perished by drowning. Terence, Brian's grandchild, aged fifteen, was found drowned in the weir, with his hands fast in the hair of a Northman whom he was pursuing to the sea.[3]

[1] The accuracy of the old Irish record is very strikingly shown in such small matters as this. It has been ascertained by careful computation that it was high tide at 5.55 p.m. on 23rd April 1014.

[2] This is one of those questions which can never be settled. Judged by the standard of his time, Malachi could have stood by inactive to the last and have been commended for it. But under the circumstances it would have been suicidal. If the men of Meath were in the third division held in reserve, Malachi's action at the close of the day would have been quite in accord with the record of the facts, without imputing any treachery. Considering the immense losses in the earlier part of the war, it would be quite natural for him to wish to save his men.

[3] *Annals of Clonmacnoise.*

After the battle no effort was made to storm the fortress. The victors separated to their several territories without further action, and began anew their tribal wars. So little impression did this great historic battle (like the later victories of the Edwards and Henries in France) have upon the defeated foemen that, when Donogh arrived on Easter Sunday, bringing twenty-eight cattle, the only result of his raid on Leinster, Sitric threatened to renew the fight unless Donogh shared the spoil with him. However, on Donogh's refusal, he did not attack, and Donogh led back the remains of the Dalcassian force to Munster.

The episodes on the way home illustrated the absence of all those feelings of national unity to which a great victory may give rise. The son of Molloy, the chief killed by Brian for murdering Mahon his brother, who with his forces was returning to Munster, took advantage of the weakened condition of the Dalcassians to claim from Donogh the sovereignty of Munster as an alternate succession, proposing to attack him if this were not conceded. But the attack was checked by the action of the wounded of the Dalcassians, who declined to be put in safety, and, stuffing their wounds with moss, offered to fight. Later, passing through the territory of hostile Ossory, the same thing happens, the wounded proposing that they shall fight tied to stakes by the side of their brethren. Their stubbornness again checks the fight; the Munster men are allowed to proceed.

After Clontarf, Malachi at once resumed the kingship without objection, and reigned supreme until his death. In 1015 he again attacked Dublin, and stormed the fortress; and during his remaining years he fought the Northmen on occasion.

But Sitric held his own in Dublin, and does not seem to have lost any ground after Clontarf. He had found it to his interest to embrace Christianity; he built a cathedral in Dublin, and went on pilgrimage to Rome in 1028.

Clontarf was the last great struggle between the forces

of paganism and Christianity in Britain. It may be said to have been the end of the Scandinavian invasions. When Canute became possessed of Norway and Denmark as well as of England, there was no longer any opening for attack from that side.

CHAPTER XVII

THE RESULTS OF THE INVASIONS

The Scandinavian outgoing spent itself by exhaustion. But it left behind it permanent effects. Like the invasions of the East by the European nations in later times, like their buccaneering expeditions to the West which accompanied the settlements of the American continent, the movement was attended with much disorder. But it was productive of lasting benefits to Europe, to which far too little attention has been paid.

We do not hear much of the disorders which attended the gradual conquest of India, because that story has been written by the successful invaders, men of action, to whom the disorder seemed but a small part of a glorious whole. We hear of very little else in the accounts of the Scandinavian period, because historians have drawn their material exclusively from the accounts of the invaded and the conquered, accounts written by men of sedentary life, to whom the disorder was the whole.

Yet the benefits which resulted, benefits which have never been fully acknowledged by the British historian, were very great indeed. They included to the world at large a most extensive addition to geographical knowledge. While the Irish monk was drawing fancy maps for Archbishop Sigeric, the Northman was preparing for the draughtsman by practical exploration of the bays and rivers of the coasts visited by him.[1]

The Viking's voyages gave a tremendous stimulus to trade, resulting in the more extensive holding of fairs and

[1] The entry of the modern name "naper" fluvius (Dnieper) in the Irish and Hereford maps must have come from information supplied by a traveller who had actual experience.

markets, in the formation of towns, in the establishment of trading guilds and corporations, encouraging beginnings of manufactures by distributing over Europe products which had been confined to isolated spots.

The intercourse of peoples weakened the local jealousies which stood in the way of national union, as the Northmen as settlers, or the captives taken in war, imparted to their associates or owners the habits of their own country, and as the invasions drew the peoples of the islands together by the virtue of a common danger.

The whole art of war underwent a revolution, and with it came a consciousness of the necessity of preparation for war, as the half-barbarous settled races awoke once more from their sleep of satisfaction to witness success won by discipline, daring in design, speed, and precision in execution. The success of the invasions called attention to the value of the sea as a highway; the invaded began to bestir themselves about shipbuilding, about winds and tides and currents, to imbibe the first elements of navigation, to venture themselves upon the sea.

The voyages of the Scandinavian seamen made the first real break in the timid coasting system of the Mediterranean pilot; they were the first to attempt to explore the Atlantic, the first to discover the existence of a world beyond it.

But increase in trade, and the knowledge and intercourse it brings, were not the only benefits resulting to the world. The Roman celibate monk had driven the British married monk from the field by the superiority of his organisation, by his teaching that only by the stern repression of the individual will could that discipline be obtained which made possible intelligent action against the powers of social evil. He taught the lesson that the evil aspects of Socialism must be fought by a Socialism based on self-restraint and self-sacrifice. With his little highly disciplined army he defeated the mob.

What the Church taught through the monastery as a necessity for success in the moral conflict, the Viking was teaching for the physical conflict in the grim seclusion of

his long summer sailings, supplementing the monastic discipline by the lesson sorely needed in days of slavery, of reckless physical courage. Both teachings rested on a contempt of worldly comfort, and on disregard of life.

When, owing to the influence of Christianity, the Viking voyages ceased, and the Scandinavian nations settled down to a life of trade and agriculture on the land, the benefits of the movement accrued to the Church, and remained to her for many centuries—so long as she recognised the basis on which they rested.

There are other aspects of the invasion which until very recently have received no attention. One is the immense intermixture of Scandinavian blood in these islands, extending to some extent even to Wessex, which sets at naught all the calculations of ethnologists. It is an infusion to which we owe some of our best national qualities and most heroic actions.

With the Scandinavian conquests the control of the sea came back to Britain, and has not as yet passed from her; the mantle of ocean discovery in the North-West fell on her from the North-East; the daring audacity which has led to victory the naval force inferior in numbers and in physical strength is our inheritance from the North. When Nelson, the Anglo-Scandinavian Viking of the eighteenth century, conquered at Copenhagen, he may be said to have been revenging the invasion of Britain in the days of Alfred and Ethelred, of Brian and Malachi.

Another unrecognised debt which we owe to Scandinavia is the use of a vast literature of high value in the vulgar tongue at a time when, apart from the language of the Irish annalists, there was no other native tongue spoken in Scandinavia, Denmark, North Humbria, East Anglia, Danish Mercia, the Isle of Man, the Hebrides, Orkneys, Shetlands and Faroes, Normandy, Iceland, Caithness, Sutherland and Ross, and in the trading coast towns of Ireland, the western mainland of Great Britain and Wales. In the tenth century there was, to all intents and purposes, a common literature in these islands.

All this was used for one purpose: telling good stories. If there is any one thing in art of which the essence is concealment of art, it is the art of telling stories, and that art the Northmen possessed in perfection. The delicious simplicity, the artless honesty of the narratives of the sagas, form a very forcible contrast to the dull unimaginative falsehood, always coupled with the hidden suggestion of evil, of the English monk.

Little as the literature itself appears in our history, the Northman's art of story-telling cannot but have had great influence on the style of English literature in the past, whether it took the form of the telling of the stories in our English Bible or of the tales of love and adventure which have been used in drama and novel by British authors of all times. It is time that the value of this source, both of history and literature, should be fully acknowledged.

What value the Northmen set on it themselves may be seen by the tale in the saga of the death of Hakon at the Orkneys after the battle of Largs in 1263. "In the sickness he let Latin books be read to him at first. But then he thought it great trouble to think over what that meant. Then he let be read to him Norse books night and day: first the sagas of the saints; and when they are read out, he let be read to him the tale of the kings from Halfdan the Black, and so on of all the kings of Norway, one after the other" (Hakon's saga in *Orkneyinga Saga*).

CHAPTER XVIII

BRITAIN IN THE TIME OF THE SCANDINAVIAN INVASIONS

"One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dream'd, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake."

I. A Type. King Alfred of Wessex

We have many references to social habits and customs in the Welsh, Irish, and Scandinavian records of these times, as well as in the English Chronicles and Lives of Saints. But the first historical account of ordered national life in Britain, since the days of Bede, meets us at the end of the ninth century, in the reign of Alfred of Wessex.

This reign of Alfred is always a pleasant stopping-place among the sands and mirage of early history, "as springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish though they be." This no doubt is partly because his story is not overlaid with miracle or mixed up with theological disputes, partly because the man himself was so remarkable.

He is by a long way our first lay chronicler, with the advantage over some of his successors that he is thoroughly in accord with the religious sentiment of the time. The events of his reign as told in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and in his life by the Welsh bishop Asser show us the working of an early personal monarchy in the hands of a very earnest, very hard-working king with multifarious tastes.

He builds ships, churches, monasteries, houses; he organises the militia, he fortifies towns; he codifies and

arranges the existing laws, and oversees their working. He has to act as arbiter between conflicting thanes (thegns); he spurs on the eorldermen and the subordinate kings to the work of national defence; and he keeps in touch with the affairs of foreign countries across the channel.

But in spite of his work Alfred finds time to learn Latin and to translate from Latin into Saxon the popular books of the day; he is a mighty hunter, a great builder, a singer and hearer of ballads (which means a keen student of history), and a teacher and foreman of all kinds of workmen. He reviews the decisions of his judges, being a patient arbitrator in sifting evidence. He spends time conversing with men of all sorts from all parts, bishops from Wales and Mercia, monks from old Saxony, and travellers from Rome and the East, traders from the Baltic, men rich in skins and whales, and walrus and reindeer, who can tell of voyages to Archangel and the Neva. He regulates his revenue carefully, to meet the national obligations expected of a king, and to leave room for liberal alms. He finds leisure for all due religious observances, and corresponds with the Patriarch of Jerusalem on the medical science of the times.

All this was accomplished by a man who for twenty-four years suffered from a malady incurable by the physicians, some kind of chronic dyspepsia, which must have been a common disorder in days when tough meat without vegetables formed the ordinary fare of kings.

Though not particularly successful in his campaigns either by sea or land, Alfred is eminently remarkable for steadfastness and ability in the conduct of affairs. But he is more remarkable for a moral rectitude and courage far above those who went before him or came after him. He combined political capacity and resource with good faith and religion which rested on moral principle. After we have discounted all the exaggerations which the biographer has embedded in his history, there is enough left to assure us of unusual foresight, the commonsense of genius, the personal mastery of detail. But more, far more

than that. Dealing with a heathen foe, who rarely kept his word, no stain of cruelty or treachery is imputed to him. And there is no other ruler within four hundred years on either side of whom that can be said.

II. Government and Military Force

Throughout the islands all administration centred in the king or chief in these early times.

Occasionally there were both in England and Ireland great meetings or synods of the chief men in which the clergy took a very leading part, to declare, alter, or confirm existing laws. Besides this there was no doubt from time to time a council of the chiefs to advise and organise for offence and defence.

One of the weak points of the tribe as the unit of society was that in war matters of the utmost urgency the king was compelled to consult jealous under-kings or chiefs of tribes, some of whom he was certain to disappoint. Thus Ethelred II, called by someone the Unredy or Redeless for not taking the rede or counsel of his ministers,[1] seems to have consulted his leaders and his Witan far more frequently than the kings before him and with far worse results. All such consultation was dangerous, tending to delay and division in moments of urgency, and giving an easy opening for treachery. If any chieftain did not have his own way, it was open to him to be inactive, or to join the other side.

But apart from such advisings when urgency required them, the king in times of conflict was unquestioned head.

The successor to the king was often elected in his lifetime and held high office under him. In Scotland and Ireland he was called the Tanist, his position answering to the chief justiciary as king's lieutenant under the Normans and Plantagenets. Such was the position held by Henry II at the end of the civil war during the lifetime of Stephen.

[1] It is never stated or even suggested by the contemporary chronicle that he neglected or refused it. The suggestion comes from the later apologists of Dunstan.

The Tanist lived in the king's palace at his expense as did the other officials of the king's court.

The most complete account of these officials is contained in the Laws of Howel, the king of South Wales, an account which will stand with slight variation for the court of any tribal king in the islands at this time. The chief of the household, who was the treasurer; the priest, who was also the king's secretary and keeper of records; the steward, who looked after the household management and commissariat; the chief falconer, whose services were essential for obtaining food; the judge or lawyer, who presided and advised in the king's court; the chief groom; the page of the chamber; the bard, who entertained the company at meals; the silentiary, who struck the pillar in the hall to repress inordinate mirth that followed; the chief huntsman, who had care of the hounds; the mead brewer; the mediciner, who was in one physician and surgeon; the butler; the doorkeeper; the cook; and the candlebearer, who held a candle before the king opposite to his dish while he was eating; as king's officers, with several of like character for the queen, have each their separate duties and rewards enumerated.

Clothing, horses, dogs and hawks, cattle, food and liquor, free land, a right of progress for entertainment among the king's villeins, woollen garments from the king and linen from the queen at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsun are their usual perquisites, besides some special gifts, some of which appear as if they might be given in jest.

The servants have the skins of the animals slaughtered, the cook has the tallow, fragments, and entrails; the judge has a throw-board (a kind of chessboard made from the bone of a sea animal); the falconer has the skins of deer, to make gloves and jesses; the steward, a male hawk every Michaelmas; the mediciner, the body clothes of the patient; the porter, the remains of the cheese he may toast. All, even the queen's handmaid, have their horse in attendance.

The priest has free land, a third of the king's tithe, a

daily offering from the king at mass, and a fee for every patent seal given respecting landed property.

The steward is paid largely by fees from applicants for places, and by the skins of small animals. Except for the fees to the priest, which would seem to be in money, no money is mentioned as payment.

The laws contain most elaborate rules of precedence for sitting in the hall, where all fed together, the value or worth of each[1] official, or fine for injury done to him, and the extent of the protection each can afford to criminals.

Kings and chiefs might and did from time to time raise bodyguards, which they paid and clothed out of their personal revenues, or paid by billeting them upon their villeins or semi-bond tenants. In Ireland the chief could go with his men to the villein's house, and stay there at the villein's expense for a period varying from a few days to a month. The time and the number of the visits depended on the amount of the man's stock rented from the chief and the rank of the chief.

When the Norman Welsh knights invaded Ireland they adopted this practice of billeting on the natives, and the English Government failed by any means to stop it. But as in their usage the Norman Welsh were not restrained, as had been the native chiefs, by any Brehon laws or customs, with them the practice, which had been with the Irish chief and tenant a mutual incident of tenancy, became an instrument of oppression.

The king or chief generally had personal guards for his own safety. The Irish ardris used such a force for their circuits of Ireland; Canute and his sons had a bodyguard of Danes, which was continued under Edward the Confessor, and disappear with Harold at Hastings; the Welsh kings had a body of mounted guards called the teulu,[2] who were fed and clothed by the king.

[1] The saraad or worth of the king of North Wales in Anglesey is a hundred cows and a white bull with red ears; a rod of gold equal in length to himself and as thick as his little finger, and a plate of gold as broad as his face and as thick as the nail of a ploughman who has been a ploughman for seven years.—Aneurin Owen, *Laws of Wales.*

[2] Note, Ven. I. vii. 13, in Aneurin Owen's *Laws of Wales.*

The members of this body were connected with the king by ties of blood, the leader being his near relation, sometimes his named successor, so that their loyalty to him was as much a matter of honour as of pay. Scott has used the unwritten law that made the "teulu" lay down their lives for the chief on the field of battle, in his account of the fight of the clans in the *Fair Maid of Perth*. To go home alive, leaving the chief on the field, was to go home to a livelong disgrace.

But as apart from this there was no standing army, but only a temporary compulsory service of the tribes,[1] the king could not become a despot, for which reason the stretch of his authority was borne more patiently than if he had had a standing army, apart from the nation, to enforce his will. The only force, even in Wessex, for national defence, apart from the guards hired by the king out of his personal revenue, was the "fyrd" or national militia, who were bound to serve for two months only. The navy was supplied in the same way. This remained the condition of England until, in the seventeenth century, Cromwell, after the civil war, raised a standing army.

In Wales the king could summon once a year each cantref, or district, to accompany him to war outside of his territory for six weeks only.

To this day, such is our terror of a permanent and disciplined force for our defence, the provisions on which the discipline and maintenance of such a force depend are only re-enacted yearly.

III. Tribal Union

In all parts of the islands the more powerful kings acted as overlords or federal rulers. But such authority was weak

[1] With a most doubtful sanction in case of disobedience. The laws of Ethelred *threaten* very severe penalties against those who do not join the territorial army.

[2] Ordericus Vitalis, writing at the end of the eleventh century, speaks of levies *en masse* of the people marching under their curés under the banner of their parishes. This levy was the march, under the priest or bishop, against all who broke the truce of God.

and uncertain in its action, only used to enforce peace between under-kings or to repel foreign invasion.[1] Its extent would depend very largely on the conditions of the time, which might or might not leave to the overlord a sufficient force to assert his authority. In this respect the history of Ireland is very instructive.

The under-king generally paid a tribute, not necessarily of any great value, as acknowledgment of the relation, and his overlord gave him a present in return.

When Mailmora submitted to Brian, Brian gave him the coat on which was the button which led to Clontarf; when Malachi perforce acknowledged Brian as ardri, Brian gave him horses, which Malachi gave to Brian's son, as his own followers refused to accept them; when Athelstan sends a sword to Harold Fairhair, his acceptance, says the saga, is construed as making him Athelstan's vassal. The reality of the symbolism depended on the power of the parties to it.

The overlord, especially the ardri in Ireland, further provided for loyalty by taking from the chiefs hostages in the persons of the chiefs' sons or relatives. These lived in the court of the overlord as a guarantee for good behaviour. John afterwards used the same means in dealing both with the Welsh princes and with the English feudal barons.

It is the tendency of national danger always to strengthen the federal executive to the detriment of local authority. This sense of external danger from the Northmen operated, in the tenth century, to assist the successors of Alfred in their attempts at confederation in the north; it drew the Welsh tribes into a temporary unity under Roderick the Great (844–877); it began Scottish history by uniting the mixed elements of that wild country under the Pictish kings from Constantine to Malcolm; and it drew Ireland into a united nation for the only time in the usurpation of Brian Boru in 1002.

When the extreme danger was over, the Welsh and Irish tribes dissolved into their wars of raid and plunder, rendering only an acknowledgment of supremacy "with

[1] See Chap. XLIII., "Overlord and Vassal."

opposition" to the overlord. It would not seem that the overlord interfered with the dynasties of the sub-kingdoms unless by incessant mutual slaughter, and when he did interfere it was to doubtful advantage.

It was the wrecking of the hereditary chieftainship of North Humbria by Athelstan, after the battle of Brunanburg, and the later struggles of competing Northmen, which led to the destruction of a tribal basis of society which rested on a theoretically elective but practically hereditary chief, without achieving a federal unity. The kings of Wessex were forced to appoint their military subordinates as earls of these dependent and distant kingdoms, in the place of tribal pretenders to the throne who claimed as hereditary chieftains; earls who were often more favourable to the Northmen in whose power they lay than to the Wessex Saxon.[1] Such new rulers were either men of Norse blood, who would be acceptable to the North Humbrian people, or they were Norse rulers in the west whose interests could for the moment be made to square with those of Wessex.

When unsuccessful, such a policy led to civil war in North Humbria. When successful, it not only led to a further concentration of power in the hands of the Wessex kings, whose authority over the Danelagh was in proportion to their close relationship with its rulers, but it gave greater authority to the earl or under-king. He was not bound as of old within the limits of powers allowed to him by tribal custom. He became more absolute, wielding more general authority, checked in his actions only so far as he was held in hand himself by his overlord, or by dread of revolt at home.

When later in the reign of Ethelred II the Wessex kingdom was attacked on all sides by the Northmen, this substitution of federal appointees for the hereditary chiefs of the tribes would appear to have assisted the invaders by substituting, as the factor of loyalty, the individual ruler in the place of the tribe.

[1] The same thing happens when Britain destroys the tribal dynasty of Afghanistan, and puts its own puppet nominees in its place.

The idea of the nation,[1] of the State as a collection of tribal communities, was then unknown, and it never has been grasped by the Welsh or Irish Celt. Each tribe for offence or defence in war, each family for vengeance or defence for murder or theft, stood by itself as a unit. The tribe over which the chief or king[2] (the term king being used of the overlord, the ruler of a more powerful tribe) presided was a body of persons who claimed descent from a very remote common ancestor, a hero (as, for instance, the tribe of the Hy Neill of Ulster from Niall of the Nine Hostages in the fourth century). This body was subdivided into clans, persons who could trace descent from a common ancestor less remote, septs, a body tracing from an ancestor lately dead, and families, the descendants of one living. Each unit, tribe, clan, and sept had a chief who was answerable for its organisation.

This descent from a common ancestor was gradually broken in upon by the adoption into the tribe of strangers, or sometimes of an entire weak tribe, for the purpose of strengthening the fighting force. But as the tribe ceased to be migratory, and became identified with a certain tract of land, this adoption became a matter of great importance, as membership carried with it the right to share in the land of the tribe.

In Wales, at least, the influence of the Roman law had led to the descent being counted entirely through males, a woman on marriage having nothing but a cognatic connection with her family.

[1] This subject is made the more difficult, because the histories of England having been written from the continental Roman standpoint, the fact that society was organised on a tribal basis in the greater part of the islands has been, to a great extent, overlooked. The histories of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales use words for the divisions of land and the classes of persons which have no meaning outside the local history. Such terms have been used here, regardless of absolute accuracy, as may convey some meaning to the ordinary man. When the author has been unable to trace any fact or custom to satisfaction in more than one part of the islands, it is stated as existing in that part only.

[2] The Irish have hindered the acceptance of their historical records by using the kingship to express tribal relations, and the English Benedictines have distorted all English history by assuming kingship in those who submitted to Wessex and the Church.

The tribe in Ireland was liable for the debts of its members, and it supported the old who were childless. The men were liable to military service for a set term, but for a set term only; and on its expiration, however great the necessity for strenuous combination from a strategic or tactical point of view, they threw down their weapons and went home.[1]

IV. Revenue

The power of the ruler, whether king or democratic demagogue, always depends on the state of his finances, and on his ability to raise the funds required for any exceptional national necessity. The king or chief in these early times, as sole administrator, had to find all funds for public expenses out of his own revenues.[2]

I will state roughly the revenues enjoyed in common by the rulers in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, so far as they are disclosed in the laws or other writings. In England the dealings with the sources of revenue were greatly modified through the influence of the Roman Church, which tended to break down the tribal organisation, and to strengthen a federal executive.

1. Land was, of course, the first and most important item, as forming the means of support for the king and his

[1] This is conclusive against any use of the ship fyrd for Edgar's circumnavigation of the islands, even if its absurdity were not amply proved from other sources. The time taken for the fyrd to row up to the Orkneys, and await the approach of the contingent from Bristol, and then to row down to London would be prohibitive.

[2] These revenues for Wessex are grouped by Bishop Stubbs as:—

(*a*) From land—
- (1) King's private estate.
- (2) The demesne of the Crown.
- (3) Rights over the folkland or common land.

(*b*)
- (1) Proceeds from courts of law, escheats, and forfeitures.
- (2) Rights of maintenance on progress.
- (3) Wreck and treasure trove.
- (4) Mines and salt works.
- (5) Tolls, market dues and port dues.
- (6) Heriots and other semi-feudal payments.

—Stubbs' *Const. Hist.*

To which might be added tribute from the dependent or under-kings as an acknowledgment of authority, or as a payment for protection, or for the right to be let alone, and payments from foreigners and Jews.

court. The chief had a certain portion of the common land set apart for him, which we may call the Crown lands. It passed at his death to his successor on the throne.

As he could not cultivate all this land himself, he rented a great part of it to tenants, receiving rent from them in kind, often in stock, and supplying to his tenants, both free and bond, stock for the farm for which he took a rent in increase. Besides this, he was always a great breeder of stock of all kinds himself, the pastures around his castles affording summer feed for his herds of cattle, and his villeins or bondmen tilling his arable land. He had also extensive rights of pasturage over the common forest and waste, a right which the chief of the tribe shared in common with the rest of the tribe.

The Norman kings after the Conquest seized on these wastes and appropriated them to the use of the Crown, enacting severe forest laws to prevent encroachments on their valuable pastures, timber, and game preserves.

These rights over land and land-ownership enabled the king to hand to his successor as private property large herds of cattle and swine, and sheep and horses, the increase only limited by murrain, want of winter feed, and extent of pasture.

As the greater part of all pasture was forest, there was a steady tendency on the part of the king and all chief men to encroach on all waste and uncultivated land, and to treat such as forest—that is to say, land which was the king's pasture and woodland and reserve for game.

Disputes about cattle-feed cost many wars between the chiefs of tribes.

2. Besides these rights the chief received payments from the families of the tribe according to the number of their cattle, for the use of the common pasture and woodland (in Ireland, in some cases, one animal in every seven), and a recognised amount of provisions for the use of his household. In Wales the families of freemen provided chiefly flour, beef, mead, and oats; the bondmen mutton, pork, cheese, butter, and bread. As the lands of the tribe became

the shire in England, the shire reeve collected for the king's hoard the payments due to him.

3. Another source of revenue (except in Ireland) were the fines for torts or ill-actions in courts of law. Such fines were taken in cases where the thief not caught in the act was allowed to redeem himself from death by fine, and in all cases of murder or assaults where the family received compensation in the place of death penalty, and the king (in Ireland the brehon) took the fee for its collection.

4. The personal property in default of children went to the Crown,[1] a right which could be generally compounded for by near relatives.

5. Wreckage, a considerable item on a foggy and storm-bound coast, and treasure found, were rights of the Crown. The right to wreckage was first released at the time of the Crusades by Richard I.

6. There were a number of other small gains of which we have little account. Aliens were in the protection of the king, and paid a fee for such protection. Where a town had developed sufficiently to attract trade, the king regulated the trade, and granted rights to hold fairs and markets, and to hold courts in connection with them on payment of fees to the Crown.

In short, wherever the king or chief saw his opportunity, by threat or bargain, to make a gain, he did so like a modern Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Where figures are given of the sums levied or customary, it is most unsafe to draw any conclusions as to the amounts which were enjoyed by the king, as the greater part of any revenues were paid in kind; and, owing to the mode of collection, a large proportion stayed in the hands of the collector.

7. Besides the regular or irregular resources of stationary revenue, all early kings and chiefs went round and consumed the resources of their subjects in kind. The Irish ardris made frequent circuits of Ireland, the Welsh kings

[1] I have not attempted to distinguish how far these rights of the king or chief were affected by gifts to or claims of the Church.

followed the practice in Wales, and the kings of Wessex moved their court from one part to another, as the provisions began to run short.

In war, without some such custom, any military operations would be impossible. The army in any lengthened campaign must live in the country. In fact, the dread of being eaten up by a powerful neighbour or overlord had far greater weight in favour of peace than any dread of conquest, or of defeat in battle.

Alfred, as shown by his will, had land and manors in different counties, and under £2000 in money, besides the cattle, which formed so large a part of property in those days.

Out of this he had to provide for the expenses of his court and for the payment of his ministers. He had to provide for public works of necessity, such as the labour on the long ships built for use against the Northmen, for the repair of the walls of London in 886, for gifts and alms and any provisions for the churches, monasteries and schools.

Asser, the Welsh bishop of St. Davids, who, engaged by Alfred to attend and instruct him, wrote his life, tells us how he divided and spent this revenue. He divided the whole into two parts, of which one was to be for secular business.

Of this first half, one-third was set apart for his soldiers, his private guards, one-third for the ministers and nobles attendant in the royal palace, and one-third to his workmen of all sorts (and to foreigners ?)

The ministers were divided into three bodies, each of which served in turn for a month, then going home for two months to attend to their own business.

The second half was divided into four parts, the first for the poor, the second for the support of two monasteries which he had built at Athelney in Somerset and Shaftesbury in Wilts, the third to a school for the nobles, and the fourth for pious uses in Wessex and Mercia, and for the assistance and encouragement of churches and persons in Wales, Cornwall, Gaul, Brittany, North Humbria and occasionally in Ireland.

The person who as treasurer had charge of the king's hoard, especially when the king was a minor (as, for instance, Dunstan during the reigns of Edwy, Edgar, Edward the Martyr, and Ethelred II) must have been possessed of very considerable power.

The king's responsibility for national defence was a perilous item in his spending.

It is this acknowledgment of responsibility for national defence which has enabled Britain for the last century to hold together distant possessions, inhabited by mixed races, bound by no ties except fear of foreign aggression and a qualified loyalty to a common sovereign. The forces necessary for this defence of the empire are now provided for by direct taxation imposed on the people of the British Islands by an assembly elected by and representing only the islands. Britain, like the federal sovereign of the ninth or tenth centuries, provides for the defence of the whole empire, and claims an overlordship over the distant territories which it protects.

But in the ninth and tenth centuries taxation as such was non-existent in any part of the islands. The imposition of Danegelt, or ship-money, in Wessex to provide against Scandinavian invasion, afterwards so unfortunately revived by Charles I, is the first direct tax of which we have any record. Those expenses of national business which were not covered by the king's revenue were either supplied by the personal service of the people or were omitted.

It was the want of an effective standing army and navy rather than internal dissension or any incompetence of the king or his advisers which was the chief cause of the final overthrow of the Wessex kingdom.

V. Law and Police

Even in the tenth century there was little idea of the State as a collection either of tribes or families, responsible either for external safety or for internal order.

The tribal formation had so far moved forward that the

tribe had ceased to be migratory and was settled on a certain portion or land. But each had yet a hostile character to the other. It was no business of any one tribe or family to look to the avenging of the wrongs of another. Any offence of theft or murder was an injury to the family of the injured to be avenged by the family by the death of the offender. The only law for three centuries or more after the fall of the Roman Empire was this private vengeance. The first duty of a man was to defend and avenge himself and his family.

Private vengeance, where there is no public law, is the only remedy for protecting society from an eternal slaughter. But one act of vengeance leads on to another. So when order first begins to appear, it is in the form of the chief regulating the right of private vengeance (as, for instance, the law of "infangthief," the right to kill or fine the thief or adulterer caught in the act), or regulating the conditions under which the parties fight out their quarrel. The decision is still the victory of the strongest, but the chief sees that the fight is a fair one.

Later on this gives place to the weaker party paying a sum by way of compensation for the offence. There is still no court of law. The injured may still take the matter into his own hands. But public opinion will be against him as a fool who will make a fuss where he might get money, and he will be influenced by the value of the compensation. The origin of this practice might possibly be that the man who knew himself to be the weaker in fight would offer the chief a bribe to persuade his opponent to consent to a money payment.

This first step towards order, the money fines for crime, forms the basis of all law in Britain in the tenth century.

When we speak of laws in the times of the Scandinavian invasion, we may be sure that they concerned fiscal payments. The administration of justice was a most lucrative source of revenue, the king, the monastery and the landed owner, long contending for the power of inflicting the fines which followed conviction for crime or the infringement of police regulations.

It was thus luckily to the interests of all parties that the scope of judicial investigation should be enlarged. Acts of violence, of which as being of the natural order of things no notice would otherwise be taken, came under the view of courts, local or royal, because the authority was concerned to get the fees and fines on conviction; laws and regulations imposing fees were made for public assemblies, such as fairs and courts, where disorder might be expected; and there was a steady tendency to encourage appeal to the court rather than to indulge the doubtful results of private revenge.

It may be contended that, as the judge had a pecuniary interest in conviction, unfair convictions sometimes might result. But the chance of this would be lessened by all such proceedings being taken in open court before the neighbourhood who knew all the facts; the accusation was by a private person and not by the State that took the fine; and the blessing resulting from the obliteration of private blood feuds offset, as it always does, individual cases of injustice.[1]

The most valuable parts of the records of these centuries are the collections of legal custom of the different races. We have such collections for Ireland, Wales, and Wessex. There are also fragments handed down of ancient Scottish law of unknown age and unknown authorship of a similar character, a list of fines for murder and theft, called the Laws of the Brets and Scots. In Scandinavia the law of compensation for murder was much the same as in these islands, the Scalds being lawyers and keepers of pedigree, much like the Irish brehons.[2]

In England the king or chief, through the medium of a trained lawyer, presided in his court, and influenced perhaps by Rome, heard appeals from local courts of lesser power,

[1] Spenser condemning the brehon laws of Ireland in his time, as "in many things repugning both to God's laws and man's," gives as example that in the case of murder the brehon will compound between the murderer and the friends of the party murdered. And he adds that the brehon "adjudgeth for the most part a better share unto his Lord, that is the Lord of the soyle, or the head of that sept, and also to himself for his judgment a greater portion than unto the plaintiffs or parties aggrieved." But was not the real complaint that the English king got nothing?

[2] *Erbyggja Saga*, 2, 21, 22, 31.

from the county or shire court or folk-moot, in which the bishop, sheriff, and earl sat as judges with the important members of the shire; from the court of the hundred; and from the courts held by bishops, abbots, and thanes in respect of their villeins.

In Wales the king in like manner presided in the court of the cantref, the assembly of freemen of the tribe.

As the growing necessity for the strong hand to control the power of the nobles became more apparent, the king's authority in consequence became stronger, the lower courts tended to lose their power and to become more and more subordinate to the king's jurisdiction.

Law and police in Ireland was administered under a different system. In the centuries between Patrick and the Norse invasions, Ireland, "the school of the west, the quiet habitation of sanctity and literature," was building up a legal system based upon the opinions of a hereditary class of professional lawyers, attached to the house of a tribal chief or to monasteries, and called brehons. This practice of resorting to arbitration before one trained in the law was most likely originally universal in tribal society, the lawyer being generally attached to the chief's household. The peculiarity of this system would seem to be that there was no sanction[1] for breach of the decisions given beyond the powerful engine of public disapproval—disapproval which might be expressed when necessary by salutary violence.

The brehons, who were in the first place poets, physicians, and priests as well as lawyers, are, as it were, the connecting link between the Druids and the Roman Catholic hierarchy

[1] At the present day there are still only two remedies in disputes between man and man, or tribe and tribe: the appeal to physical force, and the recourse to arbitration of the courts. When a dispute arises between employer and labourer the alternatives are civil war in the form of a strike with the attendant looting, burning, loss of life, and destruction of property, or the settlement by a Conciliation Board or Court of Arbitration, to whose decision no sanction is attached except public opinion. It yet remains for some really strong and impartial national government to be willing to spend a small sum of money to provide a court whose decisions should be respected and enforced by the power of the nation.

of the thirteenth century, enforcing their edicts not with the sword but with the ghostly censure of excommunication.[1] And so far as we know the disapproval of the brehons was as effective as that of either of the others.[2]

Alfred and other Saxon and Anglian kings before and after him ordered statements of the existing laws and customs in use to be written down.

Wales follows with a similar collection attributed to Howel Da or the Good about 926. Howel is stated to have journeyed himself or to have sent agents to Rome to study the jurisprudence of Justinian, which from the East was then being revived. It is possible that among the Welsh some tradition of Roman jurisprudence survived.

We have no knowledge how far any of these laws were indebted to Roman law. They apparently owe to it very little, though all parts of Britain were in frequent communication with Rome in those days.

When any king such as Alfred, Howel or Ina is spoken of as enacting laws, it means that they reduce into writing the body of legal opinion or custom existing in memory. To help the memory verbal information had from the first been put into rhythmic but unrhymed verse, as being so much easier to remember by reason of its rhythmic accents than prose. Rhyme was used or invented by the monks as a still further aid to the memory.

The Brehon laws were verbal laws in verse not reduced into writing until a much later period. The Senchus Mor, the oldest MS. existing of the civil law, sets out in its introduction that the then existing law was stated to Patrick, and that he confirmed it, weeding out such pagan laws as were not consistent with Christianity. This is quite likely, but it does not follow that the law was then written down.

[1] We call it boycotting now.

[2] At the present day the Irishman is ruled more by the force of private opinion than by any written law. Let no one misunderstand what excommunication meant then or means now. It had and has no reference to spiritual terrors, but relies for its effect on the living cowardice of the individual. The friend of the man under the ban of the brehon dare not supply him with bread, or a horse, or help in the field, or medicine in sickness. He was and is an outlaw to the everyday world.

It would be kept and developed in the memory of the lawyers and reduced into writing much later.

The effect of legal opinions existing in the memory of the judge or jurisconsult is that they will be amplified and elaborated by him. The man who holds the law in memory will not be satisfied with mentally recording the cases decided. He will apply the case he knows, the injury to a thumb or a tooth, to other similar cases, and so will be led to draw out elaborately a series of detailed rules which will apply to all possible cases.

When the cases come into court they go to arbitration rather than fighting, which would be the usual result.

The decisions of the Irish brehons were elaborated with a refinement which might appear ludicrous, if we do not remember the cause of their origin. Take as an example the qualifications of liability in a case of injury or loss, from one of the Brehon Law Tracts. "The exemption as regards a cat in the kitchen; that is, the cat is exempt from liability for eating the food which he finds in the kitchen owing to negligence in taking care of it; but so that it was not taken from the security of a house or vessel; and if it were so taken the case as regards the food is like that of a profitable worker with a weapon, and the case as regards the cat is like that of an idler without a weapon; and it is safe to kill the cat in the case.

The exemption as regards a cat in mousing. That is the cat is exempt from liability for injuring an idler in catching mice when mousing; and half fine is due from him for the profitable worker whom he may injure, and the excitement of his mousing takes the other half off him." [1] (*Brehon Law Tracts*, vol. iv. 9509 cc. 6.)

[1] In case any reader feels inclined to laugh at the absurdity of legal refinements of early Ireland, I append two cases of Brehon law of England in the twentieth century. "A railing was missing from some area railings. A child playing in the street found the hole, crept through into the area, clambered along the rails, fell off and was injured. Claim for damages. Counsel argued that the child's action was such a user of a highway as a child might be expected to pursue, and that it must therefore be considered a lawful user." (Barker *v.* Herbert, *Times*, Feb. 13, 1911.)

County Council provided carriage for children living two miles from school. Child living within distance got in and was carried, fell out and

Each collection of laws is an elaborate tariff of fines for every conceivable injury to limbs or property. All the members of the body, animals, houses, trees, &c., are regularly appraised. In serious crimes, such as theft or murder, for the first offence a fine or compensation, according to the position in society of the injured and the character of the injury; for the second offence death or mutilation is the general rule. Imprisonment is never resorted to, except to keep the man safely until he has paid his fine.

As women were unable to defend themselves by fighting, these laws greatly concern themselves with the affairs of women.[1]

The matters provided against are all forms of homicide and wounding, robbery, rape, arson, and offences against morals, such as adultery and witchcraft,[2] and against the king or chief, such as fighting in his house, coining, or conspiring against his life. Breaking the king's peace or protection is an offence common to all these codes, showing that war was the normal condition and the peace of the king's protection the exception.

Charges were made on oath before the neighbourhood in public assembly and were rebutted by oath, often sworn on relics. A charge of theft was generally met by compurgation if the man was of good character. This was an oath taken by himself with his lord and a number of other sureties, who swore that he had not been previously convicted. In case of homicide a very large number of sureties was necessary.[3]

If he could not find sureties he had to undergo an

was hurt. There was no conductor with the carriage. There was no obligation to take the child.

The House of Lords held that the County Council had been negligent in sending the child by this vehicle, "though it might not be possible to discriminate one child from another." (Shrimpton *v.* Herts County Council, *Times*, Feb. 10, 1911.)

[1] Synod of Tara (697) passed laws exempting women from taking part in war.

[2] *i.e.* poisoning.

[3] In the *Erbyggia Saga* (iv. 2, 16) is related an accusation before a judge of a woman for being a witch or night-rider. The brother of the accused and eleven others take oath on the altar ring for the defence, and the judge decides in their favour.

ordeal calling Heaven to witness his innocence by plunging his hand into boiling water or handling red hot iron. In these cases accusation must have been equivalent to conviction unless means were found to render the ordeal inoperative.

A charge of homicide or arson was punished by fine, or by loss of property, or death. In every case the family of the offender, to the fifth degree,[1] helped to pay the fine, and that of the offended shared it with him. But instead of paying the fine, the family of the offender could hand him over to be punished, or outlaw him from the tribe.

The Brehon laws contain elaborate provisions for enforcing judgment by distress of the offender's cattle, provisions almost identical with early Roman law and probably copied from it. But if in the end he refused to obey the law, there would appear to have been no sanction, except the same kind of exercise of public opinion which, in these days, enforces the judgments of the Land League.

The coinage of the brehons, in which fines were calculated, was "cumal," a female slave; and "sed," a cow or heifer, three cows being roughly equal to one woman. Howel's laws generally measured exchange in cows. A hawk is worth twelve cows and a horse ten. A dog trained to kill birds with a hawk is also mentioned. Hawks are very prominent in the Welsh laws.

The interest of these laws to us is this. The Irish, living on apart, kept their Brehon law, with its fines for murder and rape, while the English and Welsh, influenced by their connection with Rome, grew gradually out of the tribal condition of perpetual war, and looked to the State to provide for these crimes a more worthy punishment. Hence they began to look down on the Brehon law as something inherently evil which was peculiar to the Irish. In 1367 the Statute of Kilkenny, which was passed with a view to check the reverting to Irish usages of the English colonists, described the Brehon law as "wicked and

[1] Laws of Wales.

damnable," and Sir John Davies later spoke of it as "lewd and unreasonable custom." Spenser says of it: "There appeareth a great show of equity, but in many things repugning quite both to God's law and man's." The two races had not progressed at the same rate. Much of the difficulty of the later dealings with Ireland grew out of this feeling, the Irish clinging to their ancient laws bound up with their religion, and the English seeking to replace them by a more civilised system.

Our main difficulty in estimating now the value of the Brehon law is that we cannot tell how far the principles stated by the brehons were in practical use, or how far they merely expressed the scientific mental exercises of men who elaborated a theory of law from individual cases.

The Scots law is, if anything, more merciful than the English. In the laws attributed to the time of William the Lion 1143–1144, the thief is to be well "dungyn" (beaten) "or his er to be schorn. No man aw to be hingyt for les price than for twa scheip of the quhilkis ilk ane is worth xvid;" and the crime of theft is divided into two classes, the more serious the stealing of cattle which had to be driven, the less the stealing of what could be carried. The raider of cattle was more in evidence in the rough country of the Scots.

VI. The Land and the Men

The trading community was not sufficiently organised in the tenth century in any part of Britain to take any share in laying the foundations of social existence. All society was based upon a title to some share in the land of the tribe or nation. If a man was not entitled to some share of the common land, he did not exist as a member of society except as the slave of some lord, as an outlaw, or as a foreigner under the king's special protection.

Although at this time individual ownership was steadily encroaching on the ownership of the tribal community in all parts of the islands, the tillage land was still cultivated very largely in common, the chief, besides his own private

holdings in land as chief, which were extensive, taking his strips of the common fields with the rest of the tribe.

Every few years the common lands were redivided, so that each man had a chance of the good land as well as the thin land. Such a system, though it insured equality of opportunity, made improvement of the land impossible, since no man would manure, or drain, or spend any labour that could be avoided on a strip which, in a year or two, would go to another.[1]

The classes on the land were the king and the chiefs holding large tracts by right of their office, the officials about the court and other nobles holding places under government, the freemen who shared in the common lands, the villeins or half-bond farmers attached to the land, and the slaves, this last class a very large and continually increasing one.

As the chiefs had power to grant the waste lands of the tribe to its members, and as they paid the different officials of their courts partly by grants of land, there was a steady tendency to a large part of the land coming into the possession of families in which the office was hereditary. The strong kings were those who were able to avoid granting away the common lands, giving or selling the temporary use only, and keeping the reversion in their own lands.[2]

The most disturbing effect of the conquest and settlement by the Northmen of all the land of England, east and north of the Thames and Western Mercia, was that the existing division of the land was broken in upon by the addition of a number of men (not very many probably) who stood in the relation of conquerors to the natives, and

[1] Spenser in his view of Ireland says: "Another evil is that the land is let only from year to year or at will, so that there is no certainty of tenure." He explains that the Irish had no more than a personal life estate in the land belonging to the tribe, showing by his language that the English of his day were as entirely ignorant of their own past in the tribal holding of land and election of leaders as they were of the languages in which those laws and customs were written. Speaking of letters, he says that the Saxon character was the same as the Irish.

[2] In the *Liber Llandavensis* the usual form of conveyance of lands is with commonage in fields and in woods, in water and in pastures.

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in consequence could distribute the common lands very much to their own advantage. In Ireland their settlement was in the seaports only as traders, though no doubt in the country near the ports they must have shared in the common land. It may be worth consideration whether, during the whole course of these Scandinavian invasions, a great deal of the difficulty did not arise from the fact that the new settlers were landless men in a time when no social condition apart from land existed except in ports like London. When in 994 Ethelred makes a treaty with Sweyn and Olaf, he is obliged to provide for the provisioning of the force which is allied to him apart from any landed settlement.

The chief disability of the villein, who existed in all tribal communities, was that he was attached to the land as a cultivator, and that in the terms of his tenancy he was much more at the mercy of the lord than was the freeman. This class was probably in its origin criminals or debtors, society in all times trying to force back to cultivate the land those who had proved their unfitness for the exercise of civil rights.

In Wales the villeins could not hawk, or hunt, or keep a bard, and lived in villages, the freemen living in isolated houses; in Ireland the villein (daerceile) had to find security for the stock which he hired from the chief, which the free tenant need not do, and he had to pay a heavier rent on the principle that there is higher interest where a debt is unsafe.

The laws of inheritance rested on the equal division of the land among the children. In Wales, possibly under the influence of Roman tradition of the pars quarta legitima, the daughters had no share in the land, passing on marriage to a new family, while the illegitimate sons shared with the legitimate. The custom of primogeniture which remains with us as a legacy from feudal times was not then necessary, as the obligation lay on each freeman, apart from any holding of land, to follow his chief into the field.

The admission of any person into a tribe was thus a

very important matter, as he had a claim on the common land, and it was very necessary to keep careful records of pedigree, as proof of descent was necessary for all claiming in its division.

The conditions of tribal agricultural life, as above stated, were modified in favour of the conditions attending individual ownership in the south of England far earlier, and to a far greater extent, than in any other part of the islands, owing to the close intercourse with Italy and the south of France.

VII. Agriculture and Food

Everyone, from the greatest overlord to the slave, was interested and occupied in breeding stock and in tilling the soil to provide food from day to day.

But in spite of its catholicity, the tillage of the soil was most primitive. The distance in most cases from iron mines and the cost of metal tools prevented any great improvement in implements. When ground was cleared of timber the grubbing out of the roots must in most cases have been done by the flint stone axes which archæologists call palæolithic, just as the peasant used the flint arrow-heads for shooting at his game. The want of iron made it necessary to use much heavier timber in the construction of the ploughs and harrows, clumsy implements which were drawn by teams of many oxen.

Giraldus, writing in the twelfth century, tells us that even in his day the ploughman in Wales walked backwards in front of the team facing the oxen, liable to be trodden on by them if he tripped and fell.

The level lands, such as those of Anglesey, Kent, Norfolk, Yorkshire, Lanarkshire, and Roscommon, were cleared and put to grain-growing; Anglesey was poetically spoken of as able to furnish enough corn for all Wales, as the steep valleys of the Snowdon range were pasture for all the cattle. But the greater proportion of the land lay either in pasturage of a rough sort or in a woodland, which was itself

both pasturage, fuel reserve, and quiet refuge for the wild beasts of the chase.

In the spring in May or early in June (in Ireland at least)[1] families left their holdings and went out with their cattle and pigs on the range, where they built little huts of boughs. Here they stayed all summer, returning in the autumn with the first frosts.[2]

With the sickle[3] (in Wales, Geraldus tells us, with a piece of iron formed like a knife attached to two pieces of wood) they reaped their little crops of corn, leaving a high stubble.

The land in tillage was of necessity under fence, not so much for defence against cattle as against deer. The very high fences necessary to keep out deer must have made the cultivation of land near dense forests very difficult.

When the autumn came, and the crops on the tillage land were harvested, a gap was made in the fence, and the cattle of the community allowed to feed on the stubble, the number for each person being regulated by the amount of land to which he was entitled.

The chiefs and other great men not only rented their land to tenants, but in many cases rented cattle to a tenant, taking a rent of the increase in either case, the rent of land varying as the landlord provided the bare land, or as he found seed, implements, and work-stock.[4]

A great part of the difficulty of dealing with the Northmen arose from the amount of cover which the forests

[1] It is safe to assume that this habit was universal in all parts of the island where any extent of waste lands on high ground remained.

[2] Spenser, speaking of this "booleying" in Ireland, the taking out to the mountains of the cattle in the summer months, pasturing in the wastes, and ever moving on, suggests as evils attendant on the practice the relief of outlaws, the ease with which stolen cattle are brought to and mixed with the herds, and licentious living.

[3] How can anyone who has not seen reaping with a sickle understand Psalm cxxix.? "Whereof the mower filleth not his hand, neither he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom"; the reaper with a sweep of the left arm gathering into his left hand the grain which he cuts with the sickle in his right, and throws down; the binder, following him, picking up the handfuls and holding them to his bosom with the one hand, while with the other he draws out the straws with which he binds.

[4] A good deal of land is rented in this fashion in parts of the United States at the present day.

afforded them along the low lands of the coast. An easy illustration is the occupation by Hasting and his invading army in 991 for a whole year of the lands on the borders of the Andresweald forest of Sussex without disturbance. Many a time when the Northmen had landed for a raid, and the alarm had been given, the invaders must have been able to avoid the defending army in the woods, and to make a safe retreat to their ships.

The food which gave Alfred dyspepsia and the medicinal remedies which he must use, the food and medicine of the two islands, vary little for the next five hundred years either in quality or in kind. What is true of them in the ninth is true until at least the end of the fifteenth century.

There was fish in season for the man who lived within a few miles of the sea (as the monks generally did in those days, as at Glastonbury, Iona, Lindisfarne, Bangor, Rathlin, Inisbofin, Tory Island, Inishowen, and other places) if he knew how to make nets and watch for the fish. Wilfrid of York in 678–85 made a beginning of the conversion of the people of Sussex by teaching them to use nets for fish in time of famine; and there were eels in the ponds and rivers; and there was game in the woods for the killing or trapping until the Northmen came in with their forest laws.

All early and mediæval hunting was conducted on much less rigid rules of sport than our modern usages. Men hunted in those days for their dinners, not caring how they caught the bird or beast, so they caught him at all, and shooting a fox or any other vermin which took their poultry without mercy. But I doubt if game were so plentiful as to make it a frequent food for any but the richer people. To procure game a man must have not only good weapons, but hawks and hounds. And, with a short lance or bow and flint-headed arrow for weapon, there must have been many days when a sick hawk, or a slow dog, or rough weather, or a bad shot, or ill luck left the family without any game. Have we not the survival of those times in the custom of eating game "high"? When one did not know when the

next wild animal would be killed, it must often have been necessary to eat not only game, but other meat in an advanced state. Naturally men made believe that they liked it. Luxuries generally originate in hardships of necessity.

In the laws of Howel Da there are provisions for close time of wild animals, the time for hunting the hind being from February to midsummer, the stags from midsummer to the calends of winter, and the wild swine from the ninth day of the calends of winter until the calends of December.

Birds and fish were a much easier prey to the hunter than deer, unless the deer could be induced to come within close range of the bow or lance. Hence hawks figure most prominently, especially the Norway hawk, in the currency of the time, as a most valuable accessory in the chase. For deer, hares, and other four-footed game there were greyhounds and other dogs and hounds of sorts.

People in those days were not as particular about their food as we are, eating many birds with a fishy taste, such as crane, heron, curlew, bittern, and others, which were killed for them by the trained hawk.

Pheasants were well known to the Romans. Palladius, in the fifth century, gives directions for setting their eggs, either under the pheasant or common hen. They are common birds in the old cookery books of the fifteenth century. But there is no mention of pheasants being used for sport or for food in the ninth century.[1]

They ate fish, too, which we should think rather poor eating, such as whale, porpoise, and seal from the sea, and carp and tench from the ponds. The eel, called the lamprey, was a frequent item in their cookery. King Henry I of England died, it is supposed, of indigestion after a gorge of this fish (what in our day would be called heart failure). Fish was no doubt a frequent dish near the coast. "Tartes of fyssche and puddyng of purpays" figure in the royal bill of fare many hundred years later.

Except for game and occasional pork from the herds of

[1] Cockayne (Saxon *Leechdoms*) suggests that "wild fowls" in that work mean pheasants.

swine which ran in the woods, or occasionally goat's flesh, which was not frequently mentioned in those days of wolves and bears, there was no fresh meat between Martinmas[1] and Easter. The time was far distant when the cultivation of roots[2] enabled the farmer to keep beasts or sheep in any condition of flesh for winter or spring killing. Hence it was customary up to late in the sixteenth century to kill off at the end of November and salt down for the winter use any animals that would make passable beef or mutton.[3]

And it must not be supposed that when we speak of beef or mutton we mean the juicy joints which appear on the British table now. The tiny thin sheep still bred on St. Kilda, an island on the extreme west of the Hebrides, are the nearest approach we possess to the mutton sheep of that day, so far as we can judge from the comparative measurements of the bones of these with those of the Roman sheep found in England. The young of cattle and sheep in those days were persistently robbed of milk for the use of man.

Of the quality of the pigs we may judge by a provision in the Welsh laws of Howel that the king's porter should have, as his share of pillage taken, the sow which he shall be able with one hand to lift by her bristles until her feet are as high as his knees.

Meat or fish in season, eels in Lent, eggs, bread, honey, and butter, with occasional game or poultry, and the beet and ancient onion, with beer of some malted grain, was the usual food of the people.

Vegetables were, as indeed they were up to the eighteenth century, almost entirely absent from the bill of fare. There were gardens undoubtedly in which herbs of many kinds were grown, and orchards where fruit was gathered. But except in physic, where they constituted (as indeed

[1] November 11th of our calendar.

[2] Yet the beet is one of the few vegetables which is mentioned frequently as a vegetable and for medicinal purposes.

[3] The luxurious Northman, like the French and Germans of to-day, ate horseflesh. "Thorbeorn had many studs together . . . and would choose out a horse at harvest-tides for slaughtering."

they do now under scientific names) the main remedies of the pharmacopœia, they were apparently little used.

With his weapons at his side or laid down conveniently near by, the peasant tilled the fields or tended the stock.

It was every man's duty in some form or other to wring food from the soil. But there was a duty which had a prior claim—the duty of self-defence. He might be called on at any moment to go on a foray or to defend his own homestead from his neighbour, carrying his rations with him until he could feed himself by plunder.

However urgent the necessities of the land, the duties of war overshadowed it. However urgent the necessities of war, the fear of famine controlled its operations.

It is hardly surprising to find that the land which in the times of the Romans had sent to Gaul supplies of corn suffered frequent famines and the accompanying pestilences, or that at the crucial moment of the campaign the army dispersed to the soil.

VIII. Women

We have practically only one mention of Alfred's mother. She promised him a book, if he would learn to read it. One wonders how much of his character was due to this woman's training.

The historian generally attributes the good or evil acts of a prince to the companions by whom in his mature years he is surrounded. It is seldom, one may almost say never, that any part of the credit is given to the mother who bore him, in whose hands his education rested until he was old enough to go with his father or his advisers to war, or to the chase, by which time his character would be formed.

It is worth while considering as history the condition of women, the one half of humanity, in those times.

The position and marriage of women of high birth stood upon a slightly different footing from that of the common herd—marriages among rulers are seldom affairs of love, even in most peaceful times. In a day when the only security for life and property lay in brute force or churchly negotia-

tion, the women relations of the ruler were of value only so far as they could be used to purchase assistance or to buy off an enemy. So for many centuries we read of the twelve-year-old daughter of a king being married to a man of forty-five, as part of a treaty (as, for instance, Ethelwulf and Judith). And it is not unusual to find the unfortunate child returned on her relations' hands, if some turn of the political wheel made the alliance distasteful or dangerous to the bargainer, or if the valuable consideration for the contract had not been handed over.

There is another side to the picture. Such an alliance was only one of two alternatives offered to any woman of superior rank in those times, when no woman's safety could be guaranteed unless she were under the permanent protection of some strong man. With certain exceptions the only other life which the woman of high birth and good position could lead, apart from this commercial matrimony, was in the privacy of the convent. Here, except from the fear of invading barbarians, women could enjoy in comparative safety all the sombre pleasures which the literary and artistic tastes of the age supplied, embroidery of tapestries, a coarse psalmody, and the reading and illuminating of manuscript lives of saints. Most wonderful examples of illuminated manuscripts have come down to us from the monasteries, especially from Ireland, the Book of the Kells in particular, a MS. of the Gospels written in Ireland probably in the fourth century being remarkable for the delicacy of intricate design which it shows.[1]

Those high-born women were often able to exert from their palaces and convents a considerable political and religious influence on the rude men around them. Women have in all ages been remarkable for their powers of administration when public affairs have fallen into their hands, a power due greatly to the self-restraint and careful attention to details in which their servile condition trained them.

[1] This is supposed to have been illuminated by St. Columba. The Lindisfarne Gospels, of which there is a MS. in the British Museum, is another beautiful specimen. Similar work was done by the women in the monastery.

So Bridget or Bride at Kildare in Ireland, Hilda the abbess of Whitby in Yorkshire, Ethelburga at Barking in Essex, and many others administered great estates, controlled large bodies both of men and women, and influenced the whole of Britain by precept and by example of well-spent, saintly lives.

The lay women rulers were sometimes great powers in the State, such as Ethelfleda (Æthelflaed) the daughter of Alfred, called the Lady of Mercia, under whose administration the Norse population of central England and the Welsh of North Wales were steadily reduced to obedience; sometimes they only acted as the lieutenants or advisers of the men whose characteristics they shared, being often as brutal and as unmoved by any notions of morality as the men themselves.

The mothers of minor kings and the wives of the great chieftains such as the Saxon Elgiva and Ethelgiva (Ælfgifa and Æthelgifa) in Edwy's reign, Elfrida the mother of Ethelred II, and the Irish Gormlaith the sister of Mailmora of Leinster, successively the wife of Olaf Cuaran the Norse king of Dublin, of Malachi II of Meath, and of Brian Boru of Munster, took a prominent part in public affairs.

But it was not until later that the Roman Church itself learnt or was able to enforce on barbarian man that the adoption of Christianity carried with it, besides the founding and endowing of monasteries, the acknowledgment of an obligation to protect the physically weak and to raise the position of women. When society did learn this lesson, the progress made by the western nations was speedy. The Saracen advance, which had threatened to overwhelm all Europe, rolled back, and the power of the Christian States of Western Europe expanded, as the degradation of women in the one civilisation and their elevation in the other through the institution of chivalry gave weakness or strength to the social fabric.

Is it not to this aspect of the Church that we owe the Mariolatry which is so marked a feature of the Roman Church in later ages? Like many other much abused means,

the worship of the Mother of God found its origin in the effort to raise the position of woman.

This work of the Church, however, was not wholly unselfish. The clergy early found that women were more amenable to discipline, more inclined to moral effort than men. They broke as far as they could the patriarchal rule of the father and the husband to subject women to the discipline of the nunnery. For it must not be forgotten that the position of women was only part of the social status under which the family was the unit of society. The grown son was subject to his father's authority as head of the family, as much as the wife, though the authority might not be so easily enforced.

Though the change raised higher the position of women, the monastic ideal of women, if she was unwilling to subject herself to the Church, gave way to the fancy, as old as Eve, of woman as the tempter, playing on man's physical vices, a view of them which finds constant expression, where they are mentioned at all in the writings of the Benedictine cloister. It was a view which led, later on, to the fearful cruelties against witches.

Possibly some part of the power of the Northmen consisted in the more freed conditions of Scandinavian women. The Scandinavian woman on marriage became the companion and the equal of her husband. Though he administered her property she held it in her own right. Marriage was a civil compact. The man could not beat his wife, as he does so commonly to our eternal disgrace in England at the present day. The penalty was the same as if he had been beaten himself, and she could leave him after four beatings.

Alfred lays great stress on work for women. "Idleness and pride," he says, "teach a young wife evil manners. She might easily shun vice if she were oft sweaty with toil."[1] In all but the very highest classes, the woman would undoubtedly be "sweaty with toil." Even in the highest classes, the women had constant employment. The overseeing of a large retinue of household attendants with the

[1] Proverbs of Alfred, Early English Text Society.

ordering of all the necessary operations kept every woman busy.

For recreation, besides making clothing and suchlike occupations, the women of position occupied themselves in working tapestries which were hung round the walls of the rooms to keep out draughts, and in making the vestments and robes of kings and clergy. The Saxon ladies were famous throughout Europe for the beauty of their embroidery, especially embroidery in gold or "orfrey."

When the farmer, or the "husbande" as he was called, was called off to lie in the fields in watch against the invading Northmen, the wife managed the farm and ordered the labour in his absence. There is little reason to suppose that the positions of such women had altered for the worse since Alfred's time, when Mr. Justice Fitzherbert in 1523 published his book of Husbandry. His description therefore of the farmer's wife's day labour will do duty for the woman of the tenth as well as the sixteenth century.

Fitzherbert begins his accounts of the wife's duties by exhorting like Alfred that "Shee shoulde not be ydle at noo time," purposing to show how "thou shalt not nede to be ydle no tyme of the yere."

"First and prynycypally," Fitzherbert insists on the mutual love of husband and wife. That argued, his account of the wife's duties had better be delivered in his own language with modern spelling.

"First in a morning when thou art waked and purposest to rise, lift up thy hands, and bless thee, and make a sign of the holy cross, In nomine patris, et filii, et spiritus sancti. Amen. . . . And if thou say a Pater Noster, and Ave, and a Crede, and remember thy maker, thou shalt speed much the better. And when thou art up and ready, then first sweep thy house, dress up thy dish-board and set all things in good order within thy house; milk thy kye, suckle thy calves, sye up thy milk, take up thy children and array them, and provide for thy husband's breakfast, dinner, supper, and for thy children and servants, and take thy part with them. And to ordain corn and malt to the mill,

to bake and brew when need is. And measure it to the mill and from the mill, and see that thou have thy measure again except the toll, or else the miller dealeth not truly with thee, or else thy corn is not as dry as it should be. Thou must make butter and cheese when thou mayest, serve thy swine both morning and evening (with the buttermilk ?) and give thy pollen meat in the morning." He then goes on to give directions for watching laying hens, ducks and geese, and setting them when broody, and protecting the young broods from vermin. He advises about the time of year for making a garden, and for sowing seeds, noting that "as oft as need shall require, it must be weeded, for else the weeds will overgrow the herbs," and for sowing early flax and hemp. But, for the flax, "how it should be sown, weeded, pulled, repealed, watered, washed, dried, beaten, braked, tawed, heckled, spun, wounden, wrapped, and woven, it needeth not for one to show for they be wise enough," and he points out that the wife can make sheets, board-cloths, towels, shirts, smocks and so forth, "and therefore let thy dystaff be always ready for a pastime," for "it stoppeth a gap."

He then goes on to mention the riddling and drying of the bolls of flax, and the bruising and breaking of the linseed, and the treatment of the hemp. Here Fitzherbert seems to have had a temporary qualm, for he says, "May fortune sometimes that thou shalt have so many things to do that thou shalt not well know where is best to begin," and he suggests that she shall leave that until the last which will wait best.

But this is only a breathing stop; he goes on to speak of the wool, of which the wife is to have part, to make herself and her husband some clothes. "And at the least-way, she may have the locks of the sheep" (the dirty unsaleable pieces) "either to make clothes or blankets or coverlets or both. And if she have no wool of her own, she may take wool to spin of cloth-makers," and so on.

"It is a wives' occupation," he says, "to winnow all manner of corns, to make malt, to wash and wring, to

make hay, shear corn, and in time of need to help her husband to fill the muck wain or dungcart, drive the plough, load hay, corn, and such other. And to go or ride to the market, to sell butter, cheese, milk, eggs, chickens, capons, hens, pigs, geese, and all manner of corns, and also to buy all manner of necessary things belonging to the household, and to make a true reckoning and account to her husband what she hath paid."

"And," says Fitzherbert, "if the husband go to the market to buy or sell as they oft do, he then do show his wife in like manner. For if one of them should use to deceive the other he deceiveth himself, and he is not like to thrive."

A terrible year's work, even if there was a good deal that was theoretical only in Fitzherbert's account. But what woman or man either would not wish a life of hard work, involving the constant exercise of judgment, the saving habit of responsibility, the refreshment of constant variety, in the place of the eight to ten hour day of mechanical drudgery in the factory. And besides, these things were not for the wife alone. Under her eye, especially when her husband was in the field or the camp, worked all the force of the farm; she ordered the brewing and the baking, the weeding and the bruising, the measuring of the corn, and the payment of money. Truly their lot was fortunate if they only knew it.

IX. The Slave

In spite of her commanding position as man's deputy and partner in business, the woman, except among the higher classes, was in respect of marriage, in theory at least, bought and sold as a slave, and paid for in money and cattle. In time of universal combat the physically weak must be under the protection of and belong to some strong man.

In this respect the wife was in no worse position than the rest of the family. The law took no regard of indi-

viduals, but looked to the family only as a unit, and the family was represented by the man, its head. As he was responsible for all, he had over all patriarchal power.

The Irish, at the height of their monastic glory, had as their two chief forms of exchange the "cumal," which meant a female slave, and the "sed," a cow or heifer, three cows going to one female.

"If," say the ancient Saxon laws of Ethelbert, Augustine's king of Kent, "a man carry off a maiden by force, let him pay fifty shillings to the owner, and afterwards buy the object of his will off the owner." A man buying a maiden could return her if defective, and have his money back. If a man lived with another man's wife, he must pay her value, and provide him with another. Polygamy was not infrequent even with such men as Charlemagne, and was usual with the Scandinavian kings.

But women were not the only slaves. All persons who were unable to earn their daily bread, or were unable to pay the fines for murder or robbery, or the debts contracted for food in a season of famine, became the slaves of others.[1] There was no workhouse in those days in which the able-bodied pauper might indulge his laziness at the expense of his frugal neighbour.

Slavery for idleness, for debt, and for crime, took the place of the gaol and the poorhouse in all old society. The principle was not that the individual had the right to demand work and food and education from the society, when he was unable or unwilling to procure them by his own effort, but that society had the right to demand work from the individual, for which he should obtain food, and in default to take his labour.

Beyond this primary necessity to labour, there were no laws dealing directly with poverty or vagrancy.

As society was based on land and tillage, the laws had occasionally to deal with landless men. In 924 a law of Athelstan provided that in the case of the landless men

[1] It has been estimated that at the time of the Danish invasion three-fourths of the Saxon population were slaves.

of whom no law could be got, the hundred be commanded that they domicile him to folkright, and find him a lord in the folkmote; and in 1017 Canute ordained that everyone was to be brought into a hundred, and into suretyship (burh), and that the surety hold and lead him in every plea. In Wales there was no provision against beggars, but anyone was entitled to claim hospitality, which was not refused.

Every householder in Wessex was held responsible for all under his roof. As he could obtain labour in payment for protection, this encouraged the increase of a large class of absolute slaves. War with its train of captives after every foray kept up a constant supply; yet such a condition was very disadvantageous to the smaller freeman; it diminished the common lands to which they looked for support both in tillage and pasture, as the increase of the chief's slaves was followed by an increase of cattle, and an increased power of cultivation.

But slavery did not rest alone on captives, criminals, and wastrels. The slave was the staple of commerce with the Northmen, every part of the islands taking part in it, and selling the surplus population, whether kindred or not, for necessities or luxuries.

Bristol was the great port for the slave trade then between Ireland and Wales and England, as it was afterwards in the eighteenth century with the West Indies.

Slavery has an ugly name. But in a time when all society was based on the possession of land, the only possible and most merciful means of dealing with the surplus unemployed was to treat them as slaves to till the land. Each century, almost each generation, has this problem to deal with, and each meets it by the path of least resistance. Though slavery in any form is demoralising to the slave-owner, it is an education to the slave himself, and in this case it had the advantage to society that the sale of Christians to pagan owners helped to diffuse the faith, and the mixture of races broke down the tribal isolation which more than any other thing stood in the

way of advance. The sale of captives and of kin as slaves was not confined to common people. Some of the most noted chiefs, such, for instance, as Olaf Trygvasson of Norway, had spent a part of their youth in slavery. When Olaf at three years old was captured by Vikings, he and another boy were sold for "a very good he goat," and the purchaser resold him alone for "a good rain cloak."[1]

In 668 Theodore forbade the father to sell his child after it was fifteen years old.

X. The Conditions of Social Life

Long before a people taste the sweetness of comfort they suffer a repletion of luxury. You may test the advance of a race by the degree in which a gaudy excess of ornament has given place to quiet, an extravagant boasting and love of displayed wealth to forbearance and retirement, an irritable jealousy of others' public good fortune to an air of self-censure. In short, as they advance in refinement, the fashion puts off all luxury which interferes with comfort, replaces tight clothes by loose easy robes, gives up wearing costly jewels in public places, avoids the stare of the public eye, is restless in the presence of many dependents; calls for freedom from disease, from arbitrary laws, from convention at every turn, for more privacy in their houses, for more ease in their vehicles, for better roads, for good and well-cooked food, for quick and safe travel, and for amusement.

After the Roman power left Britain, comfort must have been unknown for many centuries. The condition of the buildings is instanced by Alfred's use of the wooden lantern with its sides of planed white oxhorn. He had measured time by burning candles divided into inches. But the wind, "blowing day and night through the doors and windows of the churches and houses, the fissures of the divisions, the plankings of the walls, or the thin canvas of the tents," blew them out so persistently that Alfred was forced to make a covering for protection.

[1] *Olaf Trygvasson Saga*, c. v.

Writing long after in the reign of Henry VIII, Erasmus points out that the outbreaks of sweating sickness, then often occurring, must be due in great degree to the conditions of the houses, floored with clay and strewn with rushes. The rushes on the damp clay, not changed for years, were charged with every variety of filth and vermin, the windows when glazed did not admit proper air, and the smoke found its way out as it could at the wall plates.

Later still, in Elizabeth's reign, Harrison describes the houses in the cities and towns as consisting only of timber; the houses in the open country, where building timber was scarce, being built of thick clay cast over splints between the main timbers. He speaks of the scarcity of chimneys just previous to his time, and that at such time pillows had been thought meet only for women in child-bed.

The furniture of the chiefs' houses consisted of hangings of fur and leather, seats and footstools covered with embossed leather and skins, and benches and trestles for tables. In great houses there were bedsteads with furs and other covering, and bed curtains such as used to be common in the nineteenth century, but a round log and a straw pallet with a skin rug to cover was the bed of most ordinary men.

Writing of the Welsh, who were poorer and much more backward than the English, in the twelfth century, Giraldus speaks of their beds made of rushes, covered with coarse cloth placed along the side of the room. They sleep, he tells us, in common, lying close for warmth in their clothes, and getting up at times to warm themselves by the fire in the middle of the room. He tells us that they had no tables, cloths, or napkins, the dishes being placed on the ground on rushes and fresh grass.

The usual mode of eating was for two persons to eat out of one plate, but the Welsh, Giraldus says, ate in messes of three. They ate, he says, once in the evening.

Under such conditions, to be moderately clean must have been a matter of extraordinary difficulty. Warm

bathing and foot-washing were frequent, cold baths appearing to have been mainly used as a penance only. Of St. Ethelburga it is said, as part of her holiness, that she "very rarely bathed in warm water except before the feast of Pentecost, before the feast of Easter, and the baptism of Christ," assuming that, as she possibly washed at other times, it must have been in the penitential cold water. And as you could do penance by deputy, cold bathing could not have been very troublesome to the rich.[1]

The suffering from vermin must have been frightful, fully accounting for the frequency of hot bathing. In one of the sagas, describing the midnight sun in Iceland, the narrator speaks of the light as strong enough to allow him to see to pick the lice out of his clothes.

That cleanliness was next to godliness, and almost as unattainable, must have been a proverb of startling reality in those days. It must not be forgotten that for this reason men shaved their heads and wore wigs as late as the nineteenth century.

In one little matter of the cleanliness of the Welsh, of which Giraldus tells us, we have not made any advance. They paid great attention to their teeth by rubbing them with hazel, and wiping them with a woollen cloth.

The Irish, Spenser tells us 500 years later, wore long mantles, which, as they were loose and hanging, were hard to cut through with a sword, so that they were almost as good protection as armour. In praise of the shooting of Einar Tambaskelfer, it is related (*Olaf Trygvasson Saga*, chap. xx.,) that with a blunt arrow he shot through a raw soft ox-hide hanging over a beam.

For the very rich no doubt sometimes silk was used for clothing, bought at great cost from the wandering Northmen who as merchants went in bands from one monastery or one great house to another. But for all

[1] When a powerful man had committed a crime, he could, by a canon of Edgar's, in three days get seven years' fasting done, by taking to him twelve men who are to fast three days, and in addition seven times one hundred and twenty men, who are to fast for him three days. His part of the penance would consist in paying for it.

others the only clothing was fur, the homespun wool of long-woolled hairy sheep, leather, and skins; all materials involving in the then conditions an excess of foul vermin.

Comfort needs much service; if what we are told of the number of slaves is true, there could have been no difficulty on this point. But the slave for a great part of his time occupied the same hall as the master, and often the beast was there as well, so there could have been no privacy and little decency for anyone.

As the more refined persons of a community make efforts to struggle out of the condition of luxurious discomfort, out of habits of wearing chains and bracelets and furs and silks of brilliant colour adorned with jewels, in filthy houses and impassable streets, they are accused of overweening luxury. Our social history is the story of comforts introduced by the well-to-do, inveighed against as luxury in one age, and despised as behind the times in another.

One such example is embedded in our law in the term "pin money," as used for an allowance to the wife on marriage for her clothes and ornaments and petty luxuries, a term which derived its name from a custom which came in with Anne of Bohemia, the queen of Richard II. This lady, not content with the custom until then in vogue, of fastening the dress with wooden skewers, introduced the use of pins, a luxury which has thus been handed down to our time.

In the same way the introduction of coaches to supplement the pack-horse and the pillion in the seventeenth century was for a very long time after deplored as a national calamity.[1]

No advance in comfort is possible without a convenient, portable medium of exchange, leading to good markets and plentiful trade. Though there appears to have been much

[1] Fulk count of Anjou (Ordericus Vitalis, under date 1090), his feet being deformed with bunions, had shoes made very long and very sharp at the toes. In time these came to be the fashion, and the long toes used to be tied or chained to the knees. They were called by the French souliers a la poulaine, pulley shoes. The fashion lasted for several hundred years.

gold and silver in use, the greater part of exchange was barter, a condition which must always exist, so long as there are no investments or interest for money, or means of using it other than for direct purchases, and so long also as the markets for which the exchange is needed are either migratory, as was the Scandinavian chapman, or held only at very widely-separated centres at set times, as were the ancient fairs.

In such case the precious metals become of secondary importance, gold and silver is worked up into fine artistic forms of setting for jewels or for adornment of churches and palaces, and used only for ornament or as a portable form of invested profit. Its portability was the only reason for the use of gold or silver by the merchant. The Norse trader could make better use of articles taken in exchange, such as a slave or a horse, which he could turn over at once to a further profit, making a fresh profit on each exchange, than if he took the barren gold or jewels, which might not of a certainty be of use to the seller, and could not itself reap a profit.

Othere for instance, the Norwegian who told Alfred of his voyage into the Baltic and round North Cape into the White Sea in search of walrus and discovery, was wealthy in a herd of six hundred reindeer, and furs and walrus tusks. Besides the walrus ivory, the skins were used for ship ropes. The Finns, from whom he derived his chief revenue in tribute of skins and feathers and whalebone, would have far less use for the gold coins of Wessex than for articles of use and barter which others could bring them in exchange for his trading. That cattle was the chief medium of exchange is shown by the present use of the word "chattel" for all moveable property, whether living or dead.[1]

In the *Liber Llandavensis* there are a number of entries of the purchase of land in which no money passes, the whole consideration being hawks, horses, and dogs measured in cows. The values vary. "A very good horse of the value

[1] Trench's *Select Glossary*. "A woman that had a flux of blood twelve yeer and hadde spendit all hir catel in leechis."—Wiclif, Luke viii. 43.

of twelve cows, and a useful dog which killed birds with a hawk of the value of three cows, and another horse of the value of three cows" (*L. L.* 454); "7 horses of the value of 28 cows, a hawk of the value of six cows, and four dogs of the value of 14 cows" (*L. L.* 456); in another grant the consideration is "six tierces of ale and a pint and a half of honey" (*L. L.* 464).

How little money was used for payment in England is shown by an entry (852) in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, where an abbey takes as rent for its land sixty fother[1] of wood and twelve fother of coal, and six fother of fagots, and two tuns full of pure ale, and two beasts fit for slaughter, and six hundred loaves, and ten measures of Welsh ale, and a horse and thirty shillings, and one day's entertainment. Asser, Alfred's biographer, mentions that Alfred gave him the goods of two monasteries, and a rich pall of silk, and as much incense as a strong man could carry.

The wealth of Britain was even then proverbial; it was far in advance of the Continent in natural resources, and its extent of seaboard recommended it to men whose home was on the sea.

The products of a rude agriculture, skins, timber, salt, lead, iron, and slaves, and beautiful work in the precious metals, were the chief exports from the islands. London, Dublin, and Bristol were noted slave markets and seats of export for all kinds of wares from early times. Bede (under A.D. 604) speaks of London as the mart of many nations resorting to it by sea and land, its position far up on a tidal river making it the centre of a thriving trade with Flanders and the Scandinavian coast, and the chief port from which direct trade with Italy and France by an overland route was conducted. Alfred is satisfied when he has driven the Northmen from the north bank of the Thames and has fortified London on the land side. When in his time the

[1] It would be a check on placing too much reliance on the figures of charters and records to study the value of the "fother," the Saxon tun, what would be the weight and quality of the beast, the size, material, and weight of the loaves, the measure of ale, the points of the horse, and the particulars of the entertainment.

Northmen conquered and colonised North Humbria, East Anglia, and Central England, they built up a great trade in the ports of York and Lincoln, connecting the towns of the Wash and the Humber and the five boroughs of Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, Stamford, and Nottingham with Dublin, through Chester and Man.

The Irish Northmen in Dublin were closely connected with the slave trade of Bristol.

British traders no doubt did business in Germany and France and other continental countries, and British seamen may have made voyages to the Scandinavian ports. But the Northmen were with few exceptions the general agents (outside of the Mediterranean, where the trade was controlled by the navies of the Saracens) of European trade, carrying their goods across Russia to the East, and bringing back in exchange to the rich Saxon the silks and dress stuffs, the oils and ivory, brass, copper, and glass.

The business was done at the great fairs which were established at likely points to encourage a large concourse of people. Such in Ireland were the fairs held at the Hill of Ward near Athlone in Meath, at Telltown in Meath, and at Wexford; in England at Stourbridge near Cambridge, at Troyes in France, in various places on the Scandinavian coast, and especially at Novgorod in Russia.

This town, which is now estimated to contain only about twenty thousand persons,[1] is said then to have had a population of at least over two hundred and fifty thousand. At Novgorod the East and South met the North and West, and exchanged products, the Saracen and the Greek chaffering with the Scandinavian.

Novgorod was solely a trading centre, and its fair an exchange of commercial products. But at other fairs a variety of business was transacted, legal affairs were discussed and settled, and contracts of all sorts entered into. At all these fairs the Northmen were the chief traders, uniting all Europe outside of the Mediterranean by commerce in the products of all lands.

[1] Beazley's *Dawn of Modern Geography*, vol. ii. p. 41.

XI. Education and Fosterage; Amusements

Such conditions of social life increase wonder at the work done by Alfred. The difficulties of any kind of regular study, the absence of books, of the opportunities for reading them, and of quiet interchange of thought, must have told heavily against any self-education of a hard-worked king. Yet he was one of the few men in history of whom we have any record as practically self-taught. And he used his knowledge, not so much for his own advantage as for the general benefit of the land over which he ruled.

The habit of the chief taking hostages was matched by a tribal institution of education, which later was the cause of much difficulty between English and Irish in Ireland, that of fosterage, the sending of boys and girls to be brought up and educated in other people's houses. It was a custom admirably calculated to promote peace and to encourage learning. It was not easy to raid or harry a man in whose house your children were living as hostages. For seven or eight centuries after Alfred it not only continued to be the custom for ordinary people to exchange children, for that is what it amounted to, but the habit developed of sending young people to be brought up in the houses of great lords, and especially of great ecclesiastics, where they learnt to do acts of service, to be obedient, helpful, mannerly, prompt in action.

The house of the bishop or abbot was always the training school in which the officers both of Court and Church and promising boys learnt what the age taught. The house of the king or chief was also necessarily a place of education, as the king was always attended by learned men and by great ecclesiastics.

One of Alfred's sons was sent to a school where the boys were taught not only to read books in Saxon and Latin, but to write. The other sons were brought up with the sons of the nobles and clergy at the court. Shortly after Alfred's death a canon commands the priest "diligently to instruct the youth and dispose them to trades."

Canterbury since Theodore's time must always have been a centre of learning for all parts of the islands. A series of learned archbishops, especially after the introduction of the Benedictine rule in the eleventh century, carried on the traditions of this centre of education.[1]

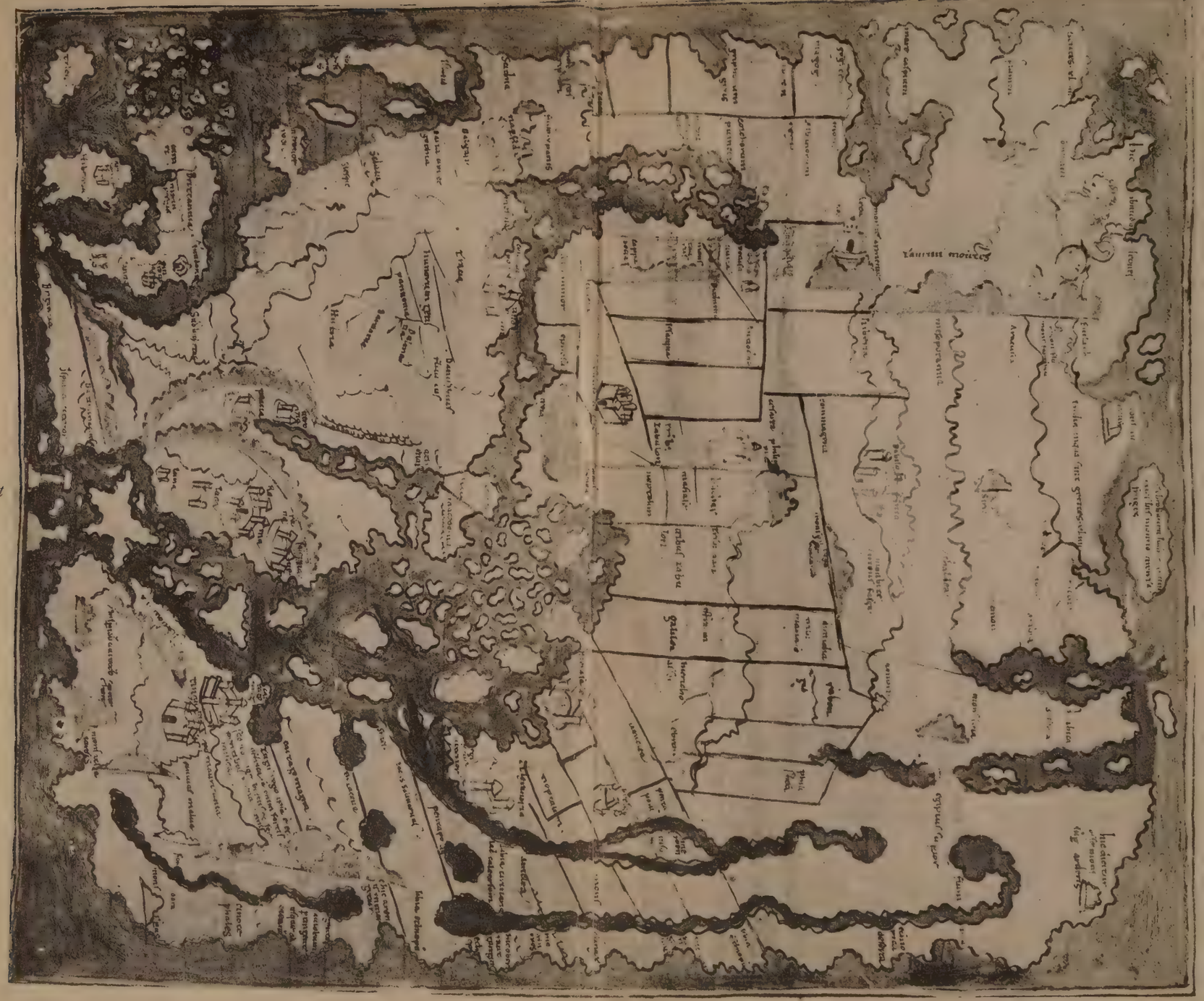
When in the twelfth and following centuries the Anglo-Welsh adventurers were establishing themselves in Ireland, they came into conflict with the Irish on this question of fosterage.

With the English the habit had ceased to be a tribal institution, though it remained a means of educating and of advancing children. But with the Irish, as with the Welsh and Scots, besides being a means of education, it was a family connection forming the closest tie. The foster-father and the foster-brothers were more to the young man, who had spent his life from babyhood until he was seventeen in their society, than were his own father and mother. He had drunk in their religious views, their thoughts and opinions on all social things. The sacred character of the connection was impressed upon him. He and they were mutally ready to lay down their lives for each other (see Scott's *Fair Maid of Perth*, chap. xvii.). The Anglo-Welsh, just emerging from a tribal state, saw in this habit the most fatal impediment to their hope of breaking up tribal institutions among the Irish. They set themselves persistently to prevent the habit taking hold of their own people, passing laws to prohibit any fostering of Anglo-Welsh by Irish or the other. But in spite of all prohibition the habit was too strong and too convenient to be overcome. Such laws were useless. For hundreds of years every fresh importation of warriors into Ireland, every deputy sent over to enforce obedience to English rule, had to face a combination of the native Irish with the descendants of former settlers of the Pale who had been fostered beyond it. The

[1] We have one of the most interesting of mediæval maps (the Anglo-Saxon Cottoniana map, see opposite), drawn, it is supposed, by an Irish monk (as Armagh is shown in it) resident in the household of Sigeric, a very learned man, the successor after a very short interval of Dunstan. He has left an itinerary of a journey taken by him to Rome. It was he who first advised payment of Danegelt as a national tax in the days of Ethelred II.

North

West



South

Anglo-Saxon Cottoniana Map. (*Cotton Tiberius B. V.*) End of 10th century.

ties of English blood were as nothing beside the stronger tie of fosterage, nor could the Irish chief or the Anglo-Irish settler feel for one another that hatred which gradually grew in the hearts of the English towards them.

The Irish fosterage was of two kinds, for affection and for payment, and the teaching varied with the class of children taught. The higher class boys were taught riding, shooting, chess playing, and swimming; the lower, herding of lambs, calves, kids, and young pigs, kiln drying, combing, and wood-cutting: the higher class of girls were taught sewing, cutting out of clothes, and embroidery; the lower, grinding corn, kneading, and winnowing with a sieve. The fosterage ended at the marriageable age—seventeen for boys and fourteen for girls.

The relaxations from labour or study for all classes took the form natural always to a rough and hardy people; there was wrestling, bear-baiting, running races, dancing, tilting, fighting or sham fighting, drinking and talking; and for indoor amusements chess, dice (the clergy by a canon of Edgar are forbidden to play at dice), juggling tricks, and listening to harpers, singers, and story-tellers.

Music takes a prominent place in church and hall, though the instruments were crude, and both melody and harmonies rough and coarse to our ears. The chief instrument was the harp for secular use, and for church use a very primitive organ.

Except in a few instances the harp rarely had more than ten strings, and was, therefore, incapable of modulation beyond a flattened fourth and raised seventh. The Irish and Welsh were noted for their skill on the harp from the earliest times;[1] in Wessex we have reference to its use in the story of Aldhelm, the Saxon bishop of Malmesbury, who used to stand on the bridge in a place of public resort and sing to his harp to religious words tunes set to frivolous lay songs. Such songs, we are told, were sung two hundred years after his time.

[1] Giraldus in the twelfth century speaks with enthusiasm of the Irish music.

The teaching of music for church use was a great part of the instruction given by the monks in the schools. In 680, as Bede tells us, John the singer, the archchanter of St. Peter's at Rome, was brought to the monastery at Wearmouth in Northumberland to teach "the order and manner of singing and reading aloud" in the churches throughout the year. The Scandinavian and Celtic races are famous to this day for the singing in parts, which has been their characteristic from the time of Bede.

There is soon the division of all vocal music into the two opposite camps of scientific ecclesiastical plain song, bound by rigid rules of composition which endured almost to our own day and yet colour and confine all so-called "classical" music, and of light popular music sung to the harp by the gleeman or ballad singer, the bard of Ireland or of Wales. Dwelling in some chief's house, or passing from court to court with his harp, he recited, as an aria parlante accompanied by chords on the harp and varied by an occasional interlude of melody, the heroic deeds done by the ancestors of his lordly hosts or the pathetic sorrows of the poor.

But the chief amusement in the house was the ever new one of telling stories. In proportion as life is dull the desire for the marvellous in fiction is developed. Men wilfully dull their sense to any distinction between the impossible and the natural, when they desire a relief from the monotony of daily struggle. The theme might be miraculous acts and experiences of holy men living and dead; how St. Nicholas as a baby refused to take the breast on Wednesdays and Fridays, or how in answer to prayer to decide which of the Churches was entitled to the body of St. Baldred, the hermit of Bass Rock, three replicas of the corpse were found fully laid out for the use of the faithful;[1] or the narrator might enlarge on the mighty deeds of fabulous kings, of Arthur, of the knights of Charlemagne's court, and other heroes of the Chronicles and fairy tales. He could tell true stories of

[1] Used afterwards as an argument for trans-substantiation.

the voyages of hunters to the Baltic for whale or walrus, the wonders of the midnight sun in the Icelandic seas, or he could give an account of the beauties of the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, and of the perils to be encountered from pirates in its exploration; or the fabulous stories of the Saracenic East, or from some old Latin book the tale of Troy, or the voyages of the Argonauts, or the life of Alexander the Great; or perhaps he invented in the telling sad tales of lovers' perils and victories, of witchcraft and of spirits, good and evil, who control men's actions. All this by the wood fire and at the hand of some neighbouring monk or some passing gleeman.

There is no need to wonder that the men who could read fluently (for I imagine in all ages many could spell out words and sentences as now, who would fear to act as readers to a company—try any village at the present day) had opportunities of advancement which were not open to the men whose physical strength alone helped them to a living.

To the hearers the most fanciful of such tales were realities. To every young woman who strolled in the woods a story like *Beauty and the Beast* was a real experience of the past challenging to some like act of self-sacrifice, some like divining of the soul under the cover of her bestial surroundings; to every young man who fretted to test his weapons on a foeman, the exploits of the heroes who defended the weak and slew the giants were incentives to courage and presence of mind in his own dealings with the superhuman giant or with the enchanted beast in human form. Europe had to wait until the Crusades for the full flood of such fancies, but the world in the times of the Scandinavian invasions was rich in materials for dreams, moral and fantastic, which fled as it waked in the fifteenth century from its long sleep.

We have many more comforts and conveniences than the men and women of Alfred's day; we have freedom from pestilence, and freedom from daily physical fight. But no freedom of the imagination any longer remains.

Our minds confined within the narrowest cells of so-called reason are forbidden to look as realities upon any motions of the world without, or upon any aspects of the soul within, which are not vouched for by mechanical probability. We have all the tales and more besides which were told in Alfred's time, if we choose to read them. But to us they are no more realities; even a qualified belief in them is alien to our training; for our sickly appetites they have to be served in highly-seasoned disguised forms; we cannot even believe that they originated for others in any high mental effort; we degrade them to be barbarous accounts of the earth and the heavenly bodies; their beauty has become grotesque, their morality hidden from us by phantasm. We have gained much undoubtedly, but we have lost more.

XII. Travel and Pilgrimage

The mission of Christianity to the heathen, breaking down the party walls of tribal division, and inducing peaceful settlement and tillage of land, did not encourage expansion by means of adventure or exploration. In fact, the whole influence of Rome was opposed to all movement, intellectual or physical, which tended to conflict with peaceful development and progress on the lines of federal union under a theocracy. The first step in the direction of such union was the lesson of obedience, the surrender to the Church of all freedom of thought and action; the second the laying to one side of fierce habits of appeal to force, settling all differences through the Church rather than by the sword.

As under these influences the converted heathen grew in wealth and in the cultivation of the arts of peace, all commerce, all travel and adventure, all enterprise abroad, all initiative in warfare fell into the hands of the heathen. Christian Europe became completely passive and dormant as contrasted with the violent energy of the pagans.

The shrinking Christian empire of the Greeks was content to exchange its luxuries for the cheap bread brought to

it by the ships of the Saracen who controlled the commerce of the Mediterranean, while the Scandinavian nations, Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes, monopolised the trade of the rest of the world, and pushed back the boundaries of human ignorance both east and west. This movement continued from the middle of the ninth century until well into the eleventh. Towards the east they traded with and conquered the Finns on the shores of the White Sea, founded Archangel, and colonised Central Russia. Rurik, a Swede of Upsala, who had gone with a following to Constantinople to serve in the Varangian guard of the emperors, was applied to by the Slavs of Novgorod to assist them against their enemies in the south. In reply he gave them assistance which resulted in the formation of a central state, of which Novgorod was the capital.

The Northmen made numerous voyages round the North Cape, trading with the Finns, and opening up new coasts. In 930 Eric Bloodaxe, the son of Harold Fairhair king of Norway, then a boy twelve years old, went on a war cruise with five ships for eight years, a cruise which included the White Sea, the Baltic, and the coasts of Scandinavia, of Flanders, Britain, and France.

To the west the expeditions of the Northmen were more interesting, and resulted in greater conquests. They followed the Irish monks at the end of the eighth century to the Faroes and to Iceland. Sailing along the coast of Iceland without a compass (the mariner's compass only came into use at the end of the twelfth century) one Grumbiorn fell upon Greenland just about the time when Alfred was in the throes of his struggle with Guthrum. From Greenland one explorer after another struck some part of the coasts of America, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and possibly New England. It is possible that they went further south, as the different explorers named one part Vinland, from the wild vines which grew there.[1] These discoveries on the American coasts led at the time to nothing further; the explorers had trouble with the "Skraelings,"

[1] It has been suggested that this was Rhode Island.

as they called the Esquimaux or Indians with whom they came in hostile contact. It was several centuries before another explorer, beginning from a more southern country, rediscovered the continent.

Besides colonising the Shetlands and Orkneys, all the western isles of Scotland, the east coast of Ireland, the north-west of England, North Humbria, and East Anglia, and Normandy in France, they attacked the Saracen kingdom in Cordova, sailing up the Douro and the Tagus, and later still they burst into the Mediterranean, conquered Sicily and Naples, and attacked the Saracens on the coast of Africa.

Though the habit of adventurous and irresponsible inquiry was frowned upon by the Church, the Christian did not altogether sit still.

A new habit which had recently grown up in Europe, due in great measure to the Northmen and to the monastic revival bringing different races into closer contact, gave a fresh impetus to the power and influence of the Popes.

In an age of general restlessness the Northmen were not the only men on whom had fallen a longing to wander. Side by side with the decay of the earlier monastic system as the satisfaction of a desire for higher things, there had grown up a habit of pilgrimage to holy places, especially to Rome and to Jerusalem, the outcome of a desire to tread on the same spots on which the Saviour and the saints had trod, to realise by sight and touch the events of the lives which had been given for our humanity.

These pilgrimages had been encouraged by the papacy for more than one reason. In the early Church a system had come into use, side by side with secular penalties, which in those days were only money fines, of satisfying the sense of wrong done by the observance of penitential acts, of fasting, prayer, and giving of alms to Church purposes, according to a regular scale of discipline. The custom now arose of substituting for these weary acts of penitential observance some special deed of merit of a more agreeable character. The Popes recognised pilgrimages and the visits

to and adoration of the bones or relics of holy men as especially efficacious for this purpose. The pilgrimage satisfied the mind of the penitent by providing a more exciting and in some cases possibly a cheaper form of satisfying sin, while they concentrated on Rome and on the monasteries or on holy places through Rome all the wealth which would otherwise have been spread over distant and half-barbarous countries; and they enabled the papacy to build up a far-reaching influence, resting on the Pope's powers of directing and qualifying these indulgences, and so of alleviating the penalties which would otherwise fall on the sinner.

It was the abuse of this power of indulgences and its extension to money payments for future sins—bringing down into the sixteenth century the system of fines for crime which was bearable only in early tribal society—which set the match in Germany to the movement called the Reformation.

The pilgrims were subject to every kind of danger on the road—to robbers of all descriptions, from the lord of a petty territory to the man behind the hedge, to fevers in the swamps of malarious countries, to snowstorms and avalanches in the Alps (one unfortunate archbishop is overwhelmed and lost as he goes to seek his pallium from the Pope), and to hunger and cold and infectious diseases in the inns of the way. Very many pilgrims died of the plague, which was always raging round Rome and in the ports of commerce of the Mediterranean, and many succumbed to the sword of the robber.

But the passion for pilgrimage, like the equally unintelligible passion for motoring at the present day, was an instinct strong enough to surmount all difficulties, for it satisfied men's love of novelty and adventure, and it relieved the dulness of life for those who could afford it.

Pilgrimage became a kingly pastime. Ina of Wessex, Ethelwolf the father of Alfred, Malachi I of Ireland, Canute the Dane, and many other kings, and numbers of chiefs and nobles from all parts of Britain went on pilgrimage, making

the combination of a religious excursion with business or pleasure. The monks on embassies from their monasteries, the clergy appealing to the Pope's authority on matters of appointment, of ritual, or of discipline, the lay rulers seeking political and commercial advantage or advertising their splendour and their strength to neighbours, kept all Europe streaming in the direction of Rome.

The habit grew of laying disputes of all sorts before the Pope for his arbitrament, pointing to him the more readily as the only visible unquestioned authority in Europe.

The habit of pilgrimage had the excellent effect of breaking down the barriers between nations, encouraging an interchange of thought and bringing the half-civilised north in close touch not only with Rome but with the trading communities of the Mediterranean, and with the still splendid civilisation of the Eastern empire.

The pilgrims for eight centuries or more had one advantage which we lack, a common language. As they wandered on their way Romewards from one great monastery to another, bringing and hearing news, and interchanging ideas, they were able to avail themselves of the monks' hospitality through the medium of the common Latin tongue. Bad Latin, no doubt very bad Latin, but still a common tongue which bound all men who had any modicum of learning to one another as would no other medium of exchange of thought, putting to one side differences of race, or of country, and bringing into prominence the Christianity of a book on which the use of the common tongue was founded. All through the centuries even in the darkest days of the corruption of the Christian Church, the use of this common tongue stood for peace and honour and social unity, enabling men to express themselves so as to make the least of their differences.

When the national languages, which attained their growth under the shadow of this common tongue, took its place, the unifying power of Rome vanished with its medium of common expression, leaving the armed camp of Europe without any international means of expressing faith or

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unity. There is no greater need in this day of international democracy than the want of a common tongue for expressing ideas; not merely a commercial medium; two fingers and facial expression will suffice for that; but a means in which the great thinkers can think, and great speakers can express thought.

The roads, which had been left as a magnificent legacy by the Romans, could not have been so bad in their decay in the ninth or tenth century, as they had become two hundred and fifty years later, but they were allowed to look after themselves. There were undoubtedly plenty of roads of a kind, all over the islands, but roads of necessity, not works of art and science like those of Rome. Such roads soon became founderous, if not systematically repaired, which could hardly be under tribal conditions. From this time forward, the roads became steadily worse for several hundred years.

All travel was on foot or on horseback, subject to danger from robbers at all times, a danger so imminent (especially in the wooded condition of the country) that a Wessex law of Ina enacts that if a man stray from the highway, and do not call out or sound his horn, he is to be treated as a thief. Those who travelled, priests kings or merchants, travelled for safety in large companies.

The monastery grew in importance as the travel increased. It was not only the school and the peaceful retreat where men could live in comparative safety, but it became the hotel at which all travellers, whether priest or pirate, rested on the journey. The travellers brought the news; they paid in gifts for their food and lodging. The increase of guests caused a greater provision of food, and the knowledge of good quarters caused a greater influx of guests. All through the middle ages the monastery extended its influence by means of this social tie.

But the monastery was not the only hotel, though it was by far the most usual one. Its use as a hotel was to some extent confined to the southern half of Great Britain. In Ireland one of the tribe had the duty of entertaining

travellers. His business obliged him to keep a light burning at night, and he had to give free entertainment to certain people, the king, the brehons and others, with their following. In Wales there was not the same steady stream of travel as elsewhere, and universal hospitality was a law.

As the towns had not yet established themselves as mercantile communities, travelling merchants formed a large part of those who sought the hospitality of the inn.

XIII. Medicine and Surgery[1]

When indigestion seized people, or fevers, chills and rheumatic pains from the neighbourhood of undrained fens, they could avail themselves of the remedies near at hand, herbs and "worts" gathered by the wise women, or they could apply to the medical skill of the monk.

Medicine is the most secretive and conservative of all sciences, for a long period closely connected with the superstitious side of religions, with sorcery and miracle and ritual observance, and expressing itself even at the present day in the signs and languages of the Greek and Arabian mediciners of two thousand years past.

Among the many priceless blessings to which we are traditionally the heirs from the Greek Empire of the East three great gifts stand prominently forward.

The Churches of Asia and Africa threshed out for Western Europe, in many a weary controversy of dry thought, the formulas and principles of the Christian faith, to the end that Rome, unhampered by doctrinal divisions, was able to send her missionaries to the world's end to preach Christ.

The codes of law of the Eastern emperors form the

[1] The author has here made use of material of a date far beyond the limits of this volume. The excuse for this is that there is scarcity of material for this subject in early times, and that the practice of physic appears to have varied but little up to the sixteenth century and to have remained under the same influences of theory.

basis and in many instances the main body at the present day of the law and police of European nations, and of all philosophic thought relating to social and political order.

Lastly, all sciences, especially the science of medicine, have their birth in the East. To this day the language of the sciences, even their names, are purely Greek. From anatomy and archæology, botany, biology, conchology, and so on through the alphabet until we reach zoology and zoography, we speak the dead language of the Eastern empire, importing it almost unchanged into our speech. It is ignorance of this supremacy of Greek in its own diocese which induces from time to time a cry against the study of the language, as being useless, or perhaps a proposal for its reformed spelling; and the objector to the Greek language is as likely to be the empiric, who on an ætiological hypothesis is dosing his patient with aconite, as the dogmatist who is tying the ligature on an axillary artery. Physic has always been Greek from the days of Hippocrates.

In the second century Galen (born at Pergamos, 131 A.D.), an Asiatic Greek, gained such a world-wide reputation by his writings that the principles which he laid down in physic dominated all European medicine up to the beginning of the sixteenth century or later. He was followed by many other great Greek physicians. With Christianity came in hospitals and the care of the sick by ecclesiastics and religious women.

When the Western empire of Rome fell, the whole of this wealth of science of all sorts was for the time lost to Europe, the hordes of barbarians who over-ran the West, ignorant of the Greek learning, confining it to the gates of Constantinople and to Asia. Amulets and pagan charms and incantations, with the use of garden herbs, supplanted science and the pharmacopœia of the Greek physician.

As the Eastern empire dwindled before the Saracens, these latter learnt medicine from the Greeks. The caliphs employed Greeks as their physicians, they founded great

universities for scientific teaching, especially at Bagdad, and at Cordova in Spain. Absorbing this science of the Greeks, they not only passed it on with their trade to Western Europe, as their conquests advanced, but about the eighth century they began to form a new school of medicine for themselves. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries they poured out from Spain and Asia a number of most learned works on the Aristotelian philosophy and on medical practice and theory.

With the Saracens in this new school of medicine and commerce were associated the Jews. These people, carrying their science from Eastern to Western Europe became for a time, until the oppression and persecution of the Christians debased them, the purveyors of knowledge as well as of luxury to the people of the West. They brought from the East drugs and the knowledge of healing plants, and they translated the works of the Greek and Saracen physicians from the Arabic into the Western languages. Such of this science as survived the decay of the Eastern empire was passed on through the Jews to Western Europe, and afterwards carried by the Christian missionaries to distant countries. Helias, the patriarch of Jerusalem, sends to King Alfred scamony, ammoniac drops, aloes, galbanum, balsam, and other Eastern remedies.

The knowledge of the Greeks had not been confined to principles alone, or to the compounding of physic. They had been very skilful in surgery, an art in days of constant war of more value than much dosing and purging. They could tie up arteries, they could cut for the stone, and they had a variety of surgical instruments of very scientific construction.

As the Church of Rome gradually reconquered for humanity the barbaric West, unable entirely to extirpate the enchantments of northern paganism, it replaced or overlaid them with miraculous superstitions, with religious observances, incorporating a good deal of the magic which had been connected with the practice of physic in the East.

There is no surer way to the confidence of the savage than to cure him of mysterious physical ills, no surer means of gaining him to a new faith than to connect recovery from sickness with conversion, with obedience to spiritual authority, with belief in miraculous intervention in answer to prayer to the departed saint.

Physic then in Britain during the thousand years which followed the sack of Rome in 410 had a double aspect, one medical, the other spiritual. In the first place, just as at the present day, it was dependent on a knowledge of the medicinal properties of plants, which to some extent was borrowed from the East. The material both for drinks and salves was almost entirely vegetable.

Such a system must have assisted the establishment and cultivation of gardens and the enclosure of lands for growing vegetables. Every good housewife was expected to provide remedies against sickness from her garden. And as men learnt that herbs had medicinal uses, it was a very easy transition to believe that their surprising effects could be conferred on the person carrying or possessing them, just as fern seed being so small as to be almost invisible was supposed to confer the power of being unseen upon the man carrying it upon his person.

The medicines were very empirical, and the operations very severe.

Some of the remedies not vegetable were very nasty, or else very unusual and hard to obtain, such as "a wolf's jaw, a left one," the dung of different animals, and so forth, "small stones taken from the maw of young swallows, not to touch either earth, water, or other stones." Topsell, six centuries later, tells us that the "*left* eie of a hedgehog being fried with oyle yieldeth a liquor which causeth sleep," and of the *right* eye he tells us that if fried in linseed oil, and if a man put it in a vessel of "red brasse, and afterward anoint his eies therewith as with an eie salve, he shall see as well in the darke as in the light."

Some of the prescriptions are sensible and simple enough, such as ale and wine for coughs, and cold water for sore eyes, with a warning that much wine drinking and other sweetened drinks and meats are bad for the eyes. Ale is a very frequent ingredient; there is a dreadful waste of good ale and wine for compounding with drugs, even for emetics. Hartshorn is in constant use for sore head, or sore belly, or sore eyes, or loose teeth, worms and women's disorders, face eruptions, and swollen glands.

The following are examples of the prescriptions given:— This is the "green salve" from Cockayne's Saxon Leechdoms,[1] a collection of prescriptions from a MS. in Glastonbury Abbey: "Betony, rue, lovage, fennel, sage, stitchwort, savine, tansy, roots of comfrey, sclavea, marche, chervil, raven's foot, mugwort, origanum, orache, cinqfoil, valerian, burdock, meadwort, pennyroyal, pimpernel, turnsot, bishopwort, hazel, quince, hedge clover, groundsel, brookmint and other mints, chickenmeat, sweetgale, hedge hop plant, costancey, earth navel, nutbeam leaves, laurel berries, cummin, oil, wax." If one missed, another might hit.

Here is a treatment for diseases of the "milt": "How one must apply leechdoms to the man, within and without, with hot and cold; within with lettuce and clote and gourd; let him drink them in wine; let him bathe himself in sweet water. Without he is to be leeched and smeared with oil of roses and with onlayings of wine and grapes, and often must an onlay be wrought of butter and of new wax, and of hyssop and oil; mingle with goose grease or lard of swine, and with frankincense and mint; and when he bathes let him smear himself with oil; mingle it with saffron. Meats which work out good blood are beneficial for him; such as are shell fishes, and those that have fins, and domestic and wild hens" (Mr. Cockayne suggests that wild hens are pheasants), "and all the fowls that live on downs, and pigeons, that is the young chicks of culvers,

[1] Rolls and Memorials Series.

and half-grown swine and goat's flesh, and juice of peas with honey somewhat peppered."

The food mentioned and the ingredients mixed with the drugs give an insight into the ordinary food of the day. Geese are frequently spoken of, honey, green apples, and fish, swine and goats, but not, as a rule, chickens, beef, or mutton. The patient is ordered not to eat "new cheese, nor fresh goose, nor fresh eel, nor fresh pig," just as if he were a fashionable patient of a London specialist at the present day.

Some treatment is very drastic. "Swinge the lunatic well with a whip or porpoise hide. Soon will he be well. Amen." Some are very simple. For instance, "if sheep be ailing, a charm. Take a little new ale and pour it into the mouth of each of the sheep; and manage to make them swallow it quickish; that will prove of benefit to them." Some touch on universal superstition; "if a worm eat the tooth, put the worts[1] in a bowl and yawn over it. Then the worms should fall into the bowl."

The other aspect of physic was psychical. Besides the knowledge of herbs as remedies all mediæval physic was closely connected with the idea that illness came from evil spirits (or, as the Christian Scientist would say, "from sin"), and could be relieved by prayers and spells and the touching of relics and ritual observances and incantations. The barbarians, who were incapable of assimilating the scientific knowledge of the Greeks, easily accepted their magic, and were won to a belief in spiritual influences to cure disease.

Hence all mediæval medicine, so long as it was administered by the monk, is full of singing of masses, and making of salves and drinks with holy water and holy salt for devils and nocturnal visitors. The Leech Book has many of these charms mixed with the botanical remedies, incantations against poison, against a reptile in water, against being tied with a magic knot, against pagan charms, against

[1] Plants. "Good worts, good cabbage," Sir Hugh Evans.

nightmare, "in case a man try to fight with his enemy," if a horse or other neat cattle be elf shot, a drink and a salve for all temptations of the fiend, a salve against night comers, incubi, and so on. One may be inclined to laugh at a remedy for a sick man which is to be drunk out of a church bell, or a prescription which professes to cure fever by writing sacred words on a sacramental paten, washing it off into a drink with holy water, singing over it passages from Scripture, the Creed, Paternoster, and Psalms,[1] "and then the leech and patient each sip thrice of the water." [2]

But all diseases over which the mind has any power can be the subject of faith cure, or miracle cure; the nerves of the brain and the stomach are so connected that the mental sight is affected by physical conditions, by food, by the pressure of another's will, by the sick man's hopes and desires.

It was the part of the skilful leech to play upon this mental condition of the patient,[3] to soothe his disordered nerves with hope of spiritual interference, to interpose charms between him and the evil spirits that cause indigestion. But to do this with success the patient must have faith.

The chief remedy in all cures which depend on the mind is faith. If the doctor could add to faith in his botanical knowledge, faith in his close connection and influence with the unseen world, so much the better chance for the patient. Faith is the touchstone.

[1] In a time when there were no clocks, the saying of a Psalm would measure time to one who knew how long it would take to repeat it.

[2] "When we saw the bride's mother a few months ago, one of her favourite children had been ill for some days; a marabut then attended, and writing sentences applicable to her situation out of the Koran, they were directly consumed in a china plate, and the embers being carefully gathered into a glass of water she drank it off. Relics of every description from Mecca covered the infant from head to foot."—*Tully's Letters written at Tripoli*, 1784.

[3] As, for example, when Sydenham in a very much less superstitious time (1624–89) sent a rich and indolent patient a journey to Inverness to see an imaginary Doctor Robinson, curing him by giving him a troublesome journey and something to occupy his mind.

At the present day we have but very slightly moved from this position, except that we assume a more universal power of God, and confine our belief in the Devil to his power over men's minds. The sick man who is cured by the patent medicine or the pilgrimage or the Christian Scientist, is cured by faith acting on his physical through his mental condition. Not by faith only: the ritual observance is as necessary a part of the cure now as when the Saxon leech washed the drink with holy water from the sacramental paten. The patent medicine, the pilgrimage, and the prayer of the Scientist will be of no avail, if the directions given are not strictly carried out, involving generally some physical effort from which the patient would shrink (as when a sufferer from acute rheumatic tortures braces himself to undertake a pilgrimage to St. Anne de Beaupré), or some mental effort to observe a rule of hygiene which would rarely be observed if left to the patient or ordered as a matter of course.

And if this is the case at the present day, much more so was this faith and ritual effective when man's every action for good or evil was looked on as the result of the operation of an unseen world, waging an incessant battle for good or evil, in which evil very often got the mastery, not only over man's soul, but over the physical condition which affected his mind.

If the cow held up her milk, or the horse had the staggers, if a man suffered from stomach ache or a woman from disappointed affection, the natural cause would be an evil spirit working through men or women devoted to the devil's service, especially if the owner or human patient was conscious, as he was certain to be, of unexpiated sin; and the natural remedy would be the invocation of the saints to offset the diabolical power.

For more than a thousand years the minds of all men were absolutely ruled by a belief in sorcery, to which the secretive character of medicine lent its association. The monks having a practical monopoly of the mysterious art of writing invested their cures with particular reverence. "And

in silence shall one write some writing," is part of a prescription for fever in the Saxon leechdoms.[1]

The belief in the connection of devils with women was very general, especially after the monastic revival in the ninth century predisposed the minds of the ascetics to look upon women as beings spiritually weaker and therefore more subject to diabolical influences than men. So when the devil visited the eater of goose with acute indigestion, and he saw the nightmare in the visions of the night, the devil would be most likely to appear in the form of a woman, especially if the sufferer were a monk, who was learned in the commerce of the incubi (male devils) with women, or the succubi (female devils) with men as a constant and natural condition.[2]

The whole subject would be amusing if it were not so terribly pathetic. But many thousands of wretched women were later on burnt on the accusation of witchcraft, both by the Churchmen and by the Puritans. Of all the terrible chapters in the world's history there is none so terrible, so full of despairing cruelty, as that relating to witchcraft.

[1] As for example:—

℥
Succ. Taraxac. 3 v
Tinct. Gentian Co. m xl
Syr. Amant.
Decoct. Scopar. w ℨℨj viij

M.F.M. (*i.e. misce fiat mistura*, directions to dispenser) Sig. cap: cockl: mag ii 4th aq. hora ex paul: aquae.
Glastonbury. A.D. XVII Kal, Jun. MIMIX.

In English:—

℥ (the sign of the planet Jupiter).
Take thou five drachms of the juice of dandelion,
forty minims of compound tincture of gentian,
one ounce of syrup of orange peel,
decoction of broom up to eight ounces.
Let a mixture be made.
Let him take two large spoonfuls at each fourth hour in a little water.
Glastonbury, May 16th, 1909.

[2] Andrew Borde, in the sixteenth century, traces nightmare to a "vaporous humour or fumositie rynsynge out and from the stomake to the brayne, the result of surfitynge and drunkennes and the position of lying in the bed." But he speaks of the succubus and incubus as being the supposed cause.

Besides the cure of disease, the physician applied himself to that disease of the mind and body called love. The preparation of love philtres and of charms to produce amorousness was part of the leech's business. The lovesick men and maidens who used them were afraid to confess to the means used, and those they employed would not dare to disclose them. Hence love affairs were swept into the hands of the physician and covered up with an agency of the devil.

If the love philtre failed, and the beloved one looked fondly on another, it was a short step to revenge by poison.

Poisoning, as we know, was more rife in Italy than in the north, but the danger of the leech becoming a poisoner, if he were his own chemist and botanist, is great in all places and at all times in the world's history. An overdose of a poisonous herb must in many cases have rid a man of a dangerous enemy.

As medicine is one of the very few branches of human knowledge which finds its own level undeterred by the barriers which confine other arts and sciences, the record of medicine for Wessex or East Anglia may be considered to represent the medicinal knowledge of all Britain at this time. If there were a good physician in England or Ireland, his fame and his practice would find its way to the other country, whatever their relations might be.[1]

But there was one difference, the difference which runs through all the relations of social life, through all the professions which men practised in British history; the profession of medicine in England fell into the hands of the Benedictine monks and was dominated by them, while in Ireland or Wales the office of mediciner, like that of legal adviser, remained hereditary in the tribe. The family kept a MS. medical book, in which was entered all the receipts and prescriptions in use. Several such are extant in Irish libraries, but have not been translated.

A curious provision in the laws of Howel Dda is that the king's physician had to obtain an indemnity from the

[1] The first mention of physicians in the Irish Annals is under date 860: "Ua Tindridh, the most learned physician of Ireland, died."

kindred of the sick person, as otherwise he would have to answer for the results of his remedies.

The two great early schools of physic were Salerno in South Italy and Montpellier in France. Though the professors at these schools had a good knowledge of medicine from books, they appear to have been wanting in observation. Salerno was a very ancient secular school of medicine, established in a famous port. Medicine came there from the Saracens, through the Jews, and possibly later through the influence of St. Benedict's Monastery of Monte Cassino. These old universities were not ashamed to have women as teachers; one Totula, who in the eleventh century wrote a book on the diseases of women, taught and practised at Salerno, and St. Hildegard in the twelfth century, abbess of Rupertsberg, near Bingen on the Rhine, wrote a treatise on Materia Medica, and achieved a considerable reputation as a physician.

Within a hundred years after Alfred's death, the Jews had come to the first rank as physicians. They were forbidden in theory to practise, but as a matter of practice every court had Jewish physicians. The peculiar position of this people enabled them to become not only the physicians but the political ambassadors and the financiers of the courts. They had to deal with new and terrible diseases; the smallpox first appearing in Egypt in the seventh century, and the bubonic plague.

In 1139 Innocent II forbade the clergy to have anything to do with medicine. They of course evaded the order, and practised to the detriment of Salerno and Montpellier.

Until the sixteenth century, though it may have improved in quality, the practice of medicine remained of very much the same character as in Alfred's time. Bernard, the Provincial of Salerno (about 1150), shows his want of confidence in the physicians of his day by advising the poor not to waste money in buying drugs, but to gather the herbs in the fields.

We have a very interesting account of a famous quack called John of Gaddesden, the first Englishman employed as

a court physician, who flourished about 1320,[1] an example of the empiric, who in all times preys on the half-sick, on those whose minds react on their bodies.

He neglected nothing; could cut corns, kill lice, draw teeth, and suggest perfumes and washes for the ladies' complexions and dyes for their hair; and he has, says Freind, such a respect for the rich that he is always studying to invent some of the most select and dearest medicine for them, and if there is a very good thing indeed he orders twice the quantity. For epileptics he provides "a boar's bladder boiled," and mistletoe and a cuckoo—not so absurd as it sounds, as he had to deal, like modern physicians, with bundles of "nerves" and shams. When a scrofulous disease does not give way to the sovereign remedies of dove's dung or blood of a weasel, he prescribes the king's touch. Dropsies he cures with spikenard and palsy with aqua vitæ.

He declares that the prince has smallpox, and prescribes for its treatment that the patient should be wrapped in scarlet cloth, or any other red cloth, and that everything about the bed is to be made red.

In 1511 (3 Henry VIII, c. 9) a change is made. "Whereas," says the statute, "common artificers, as smiths, weavers, and women," take on themselves cures in which they "partly use sorcery and witchcraft, and partly apply such medicines unto the disease as be very noxious and nothing meet therefore," it is provided that persons should be licensed by the Bishop of London or Dean of St. Paul's, assisted by four doctors of physic, or by the bishop of the diocese, with such expert persons as he may call to him.

The following are two examples of prescriptions in use[2] in the treatment of the sweating sickness, a disease which was introduced into England just before this statute by the army which fought at Bosworth:—

First, "Take half a handful of rew, called herbe grace, an handful marygold, half an handful featherfew, a handful

[1] Freind's *History of Physic.*
[2] Aubrey's *History of England*, ii. 286.

sorrel, a handful burnet, and half an handful dragons, the top in summer, the root in winter; wash them in running water and put them in an earthen pot with a pottle of running water, and let them seethe soberly to nigh the half be consumed, and then draw aback the pot to it be almost cold, and then strain it into a fair glass, and keep it close, and use thereof morn and even, and when need is oftener; and if it be bitter, delay it with sugar-candy: and if it be taken afore the pimples break forth, there is no doubt but with the grace of Jesu, it shall amend any man, woman, or child."

Second, "Another very true medicine—for to say every day at seven parts of your body, seven paternosters, and seven Ave Marias, with one Credo at the last. Ye shall begyn at the ryght syde, under the ryght ere, saying the 'paternoster qui es in coelis, sanctificetur nomen tuum,' with a cross made there with your thumb, and so say the paternoster full complete, and one Ave Maria, and then under the left ere," and so on over other parts: "and these thus said daily, with the grace of God is there no manner drede hym."

The companion science of surgery or chirurgery, dependent on the study of anatomy and the dissection of bodies, remained in the hands of the monks and learned men until the middle of the twelfth century, when it was condemned by the papacy as unfit for the priesthood. It fell in consequence into the hands of unlearned and unskilful men just about the time when human dissection had been revived.

After a battle between the forces of Magnus the Good of Norway and the people of Pomerania (Vindland), there were too few "doctors" for the many wounded. The king went round and chose out the most likely men, stroked their palms and chose those who had the softest hands to bind up wounds. "And," says the saga, "although none of them had ever tried it before, they all became afterwards the best doctors."

As an example of amateur surgery, in 1159 Hoveden, the

most responsible of all the special correspondents of Henry II's reign, tells us the following: The duke of Austria, who had seized and imprisoned Richard I, had crushed his foot by the fall of his horse on him. It turned black, and the doctors ordered it to be amputated. But no one could be persuaded to undertake the responsibility. At last the duke obliged his chamberlain to perform it. The duke himself held an axe close to the bone of the leg while the chamberlain, wielding a mallet, after three blows, with great difficulty cut off the foot. He died.

Guido de Cauliaco, 1363, says[1] that there were five sects among surgeons in his time—(1) those who indifferently applied poultices to all wounds and abscesses; (2) those who used wine only; (3) those who used ointments and soft plasters; (4) those who used charms, potions, oil, and wool; and (5) those who had recourse only to saints and to women and ignorant people. There would not seem to be much choice.

Thomas Gale, writing in the time of Henry VIII of England of the army surgeons of his day, describes them as "a great rabblement of sow-gelders and horse-gelders with tinkers and cobblers," and describes how when called on to show "what chirurgery stuff they had to cure men withal," they would bring out a pot of "such trumpery as they did use to grease horses' heels withal and laid upon scabbed horses' backs," and a "noble salve" made out of "shoemaker's wax" with "the rust of old pans."

The surgeons and barbers were one body until 1462, when the barbers were incorporated as a company. By 32 Henry VIII barbers were not allowed to act as surgeons, "except only drawing of teeth," and surgeons were not to shave or cut hair.

In 1518 Linacre obtained letters patent from Wolsey to establish the College of Physicians, and thenceforward the College licenses physicians and controls prescriptions.

Up to 1518 medicine and surgery, in common with every other art and science, were swaddled by the bands with

[1] Freind's *History of Physic*.

which the Church prevented all free movement. Any study of chemistry or physics or mathematics was rigidly controlled by existing theories, free investigation was discountenanced, the prevalent beliefs in astrology forbade operations attended with bleeding unless the sign was favourable,[1] theories about different complexions and different humours of the body led the surgeon astray, his instruments were imperfect, and he had no power of relief by antiseptics. In spite of all this, this youngest of the sciences gradually progressed, until at the present day operations of most extraordinary skill can effect cures almost incredible.

As each age passes it condemns the practice and prescriptions of those that went before it. We use the same herbs and drugs as the Greek physician used, and we prescribe them in his language. And it is quite possible that the next generation will make fun of our theory of microbes.

The plagues and murrain, the divine vengeance for filthy living, which decimated people and beasts alike, fill the Chronicles of the times. Sometimes they swept off a whole monastery, leaving none or next to none to perform ordinary offices of life, and they spared neither kings nor bishops. Yet such plagues were only the normal condition. It was only when exceptionally severe that they found mention (at intervals of ten years or so) in the Chronicles. The great plague from which all others date, the plague which, from the depopulation of Eastern Europe which followed, was a principal cause of the fall of the Eastern Empire, a plague noticed by the Irish Chroniclers, took place in the reign of Justinian in 543. The first great plague recorded in Britain is that of 664, of which Bede gives an account. After an immense slaughter in Southern Britain, it raged fearfully in North Humbria, and was especially severe in Ireland. The missions from Ireland and North Humbria to the Continent for conversion of

[1] Theodore taught that it was dangerous to let blood on the fourth day of the moon (Bede, v. 3). The belief exists in most country districts at the present day.

the heathen, and the close intercourse that followed, might well account for this if the plague was still in existence in the west of Europe. In 829 all the monks except five in the monastery of Christchurch, Canterbury, died of the plague, and the archbishop was obliged to fill up the monastery with seculars.

In an age of perpetual war pestilence must have been increased by the number of unburied bodies. Exceptional pestilences are recorded in 897, after the wars with the Northmen in Alfred's time, in Edgar's reign in 962, in 968, and in 1005, when Sweyn was driven by it away from England. These pestilences were always accompanied by famine, and generally by a murrain among the cattle. England had a reputation for pestilence arising from famine. An old mediæval saying applies famine to the English, fire to the French, and leprosy to the Northmen. In 1084 there was a fearful pestilence in Ireland. Tighernach asserts that it killed a fourth part of the men of Ireland.[1] In 1068 the murrain of cattle is sorrowfully mentioned in England, and in 1087 the pestilence, by which William the Conqueror came to his death, so severe that "very nearly every second man" was ill with diarrhœa or dysentery. Such plagues had, no doubt, the good effect of killing off the weakly and unfit of both animals and men, conserving the race by producing a hardy physical frame to the benefit of future generations. But the population could not increase very fast in mediæval times. A good healthy pestilence is in all ages of decadence a relief to overpopulation, but in these ages it acted on a sparsely-settled people and a normally healthy climate.

Plague and pestilence, famine, unceasing war, indigestible food, and severe medicinal remedies, all of them helped to keep the people few in number and strong in physique.

[1] He attributes it to three battalions of demons who came out of the northern isles, on the authority of "one who used to haunt the fairy mound every year on Hallowe'en and had seen them."

CHAPTER XIX

THE NORMAN CONQUEST

I. The Earldoms under Edward the Confessor

In 1035 Canute died. The long peace which the union of England and Scandinavia under one head brought to Britain had resulted in a great increase of trade and of national wealth, bringing Britain closer to conditions in Scandinavia and the Continent and to Rome.

The time was not yet ripe for hereditary empires; Canute made no effort at his death to hold together the scattered nations which his energy had subjected to his sceptre. The loyalty to any overlord at that time was not connected with land, but personal, dying with the man who had made himself lord of different and often hostile peoples. It did not, for instance, at all follow that because people submitted to Athelstan they would submit to Dunstan and Edgar.

Like Charlemagne before him, and William I and Henry II of England after him, Canute divided his empire, making his son Sweyn king of the Norwegians, and Hardicanute, his son by Emma, king of the Danes. On his death, the Witan met at Oxford and chose another son, Harold, supposed to be the child of the daughter of an English eorlderman as king of England, in spite of the opposition of Wessex.

Emma was holding Wessex at Winchester, where the king's treasure was kept. Her two sons by Ethelred, Alfred and Edward, with a number of Normans, came over either as visitors, or in the hope of exciting a rising in their favour. Alfred, with his companions, was taken, as it is asserted, by Godwin, the earl of Wessex, under Harold's

orders, and was blinded and killed. Edward fled back to Normandy. Harold sent his guards to plunder the widow of Canute's treasure, and drove her out to take refuge with Baldwin in Flanders.

Harold died in 1040, succeeded by his brother Hardicanute, who died in 1042. The line of Alfred was again restored in the person of Edward, Emma's son, at that time living in England, who was at once proclaimed king. The only matters noted in the reigns of Canute's sons were the heavy taxes laid on by them to provide for their fleets, and the severity of the seasons.

Edward had been in exile for twenty-nine years and must have been in all essentials and in all his sympathies a Norman. He introduced into England the Norman passion for church building, appointed Normans to posts of honour, and surrounded himself, as was very natural, with Norman adherents. Throughout his reign the Norman influence was increasing in rivalry with the Wessex Saxon and the Wessex Northmen, until the two met on the field of Hastings in 1066.

At first the Wessex influence was in the ascendant. Edward married Edith, the daughter of Godwin the Earl, who became the chief adviser, directing the national policy of the country in foreign affairs. His sons Sweyn (Swegen), Harold and Tostig divided with him the Southern earldoms, Mercia in the hands of Earl Leofric and North Humbria under Siward remaining a neutral balance outside the Wessex influence. The great earls had become very independent of the crown in matters relating to the internal management of their earldoms. The rivalry between Wessex and the north, which is hardly yet extinct, weakened any united national effort, and only too often placed the king in the position of arbitrator in outbreaks of civil war.

The piratical ravages, which had apparently ceased under the Scandinavian kings, began again in some measure, both in the east and from Ireland, Flanders being used as the receiving house for the plunder from

the coast of Kent and Essex. But Christianity, which had been so effectually enforced in Scandinavia by the sword of St. Olaf, had taken the heart out of the Viking raids. No attack in force was made. Invasion from Norway, against which Edward provided a great fleet, was prevented by wars between Magnus and Sweyn, Canute's son, which ended in the defeat of Sweyn and the death of Magnus.

The rivalry between Wessex and the Normans smouldered, until in 1051 the action of some Normans at Dover in the retinue of Eustace earl of Boulogne, who had married Edward's sister, blew it into a flame. These soldiers, looking for quarters at Dover on the occasion of a visit of Eustace to Edward, tried to force entrance to a house. Being opposed, they killed the owner. The men of Dover retaliated and killed Normans in their town. Eustace with his following went to Edward, who was at Gloucester, and accused to him the men of Dover.

Edward called upon Godwin to punish the wrongdoers, but Godwin had no mind to punish the men of his earldom for acts of self-defence against Normans. He and his sons Sweyn and Harold at once collected their forces and marched on Gloucester, demanding that Earl Eustace and his companions should be given up to them. Edward naturally refused a demand which according to the value then placed on human life was unreasonable. He called in Leofric and Siward who came with their followers to oppose Godwin.

The good sense of the leaders avoided civil war. The armies separated and the Witan was appointed to meet in London to discuss the matter. By the time it met, Godwin's forces had gradually dispersed, while Edward had retained the armies of his northern earls. As a result Godwin and his whole family were outlawed. Edith, the king's wife, was contemptuously sent to a nunnery, Godwin with his sons Sweyn, Girth, and Tostig who had married Judith of Flanders, fled to the court of Baldwin, and Harold and Leofric went to Ireland, whence they pillaged by sea the

west and the south coast, the king equipping a fleet to oppose them, with no effect.

The Norman party for the moment controlled Wessex and the earldoms of Godwin's sons. William of Normandy, the bastard son of Robert the Devil, who was later to become the Conqueror of England, took the opportunity to come over to England with a number of followers to strengthen his party and to congratulate Edward on his release from Saxon control.

But the Norman triumph on this occasion did not last long. Godwin and his family found means to influence the Witan and to conciliate the citizens of London. They sailed up the Thames and with a considerable force confronted Edward and his northern levies at Southwark. Whatever might be the feeling between north and south, Edward's army had no wish to bring on civil war for the Normans. The upshot was that Godwin and his party were restored to power, the queen returned from her convent, and the Normans, including Robert of Jumièges, the Norman archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops of London and Lincoln, fled for their lives across the Channel to Normandy or took refuge with Macbeth in Scotland. From this time until the Conquest, the Saxon party of Wessex, the party of Godwin, was predominant in England.

Lothian, the northern part of North Humbria, ceded by the earl to Malcolm after the battle of Carham, was becoming a refuge for the malcontents from England. In the fierce internal wars between the Scottish king and his nobles, and between the Scots and the Northmen on the west and north, these men were welcome to both sides as mercenary soldiers. The country on both sides of the Tweed gradually became settled by a class of men who nominally owed allegiance to the king of Scotland or of England, but really seldom acknowledged any master.

In long time a rough code of customary law grew up to define the relations of these isolated outposts to each other and to the two kingdoms. It was not to the interest of either country to enforce these customary laws too strictly.

If the border "riders" were not friendly now their help in wars between the two countries might be needed by and by. So for some six hundred years or more England and Scotland were cursed by a perpetual plague of fire and rapine on the borders. England, as being the richer country, must have been the most attractive prey; Scotland, as the poorer, was the more heavily punished by the anarchy and the raids. That part of her land which by good cultivation could have immensely increased her military resources lay a waste, desolated by the incessant feuds of the invader and of her own people; so much so, that when the kings of England in after days invaded Scotland, they carried with them their own provisions, or sent fleets along the coast to secure supplies.

The politic Malcolm II died in 1034,[1] and was succeeded by Duncan, the king of Strathclyde. Duncan's reign was not a fortunate one. He invaded the Orkneys, but his cousin Thorfinn repulsed him in one engagement after another, defeating him at the last in a great battle near Burghead. Thorfinn conquered all north of the Tay, and, getting possession of the Sudreys, brought under one hand all or nearly all of the Norse possessions on the Scottish mainland.

Duncan met with still greater misfortune nearer home. Macbeth, the marmoer, or earl of Moray, the same Macbeth who did homage to Canute in 1031, was also a grandson of Malcolm's on the mother's side, and was married to a granddaughter of Kenneth IV who had been killed by Malcolm. He had probably helped Thorfinn against Duncan in his northern campaigns.

[1] So Robertson, *Early Kings of Scotland*, i. 98. But P. A. Munch, the historian of Norway, in the *Chronicle of Man* (Manx Society's publication), p. 139, note (*a*), says: "We take it as granted that the reader is aware of the mistake so common among the historians of Scotland to confound the two Malcolms here mentioned, and to make one of them as if one Malcolm only (Malcolm II) reigned from 1004 to 1034." The very trustworthy Tighernach states expressly that "King Malcolm Mac Malbrigid Mac Ruairi" died in 1029, and "King Malcolm Mac Kenneth" in 1034. They were both heads of the two rival dynasties who claimed the crown of Scotland, and the representatives of whom for a long period reigned almost alternately—the Crœbor Moray dynasty, and that of Mac Alpin. Munch also quotes the *Orkneyinga Saga* in support of this. But he does not explain why the latter Malcolm was not Malcolm III.

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Macbeth claimed the throne of Scotia. In 1039 he killed Duncan, and drove his son Malcolm (afterwards Malcolm III) across the borders. Macbeth, combining the Pictish kingdom of Scotland with the Norse provinces north of the chain of lakes now forming the Caledonian canal, ruled over a larger dominion than any previous ruler. After his death Thorfinn succeeded to all this northern part, to Galloway, the Sudreys, and to influence in Ireland. Scotia shrunk again to that part of Scotland on the east between Oykel and Shin and the Tweed.

Young Malcolm repaired to the English Court, where he remained for some time. In 1054, soon after Godwin's rout of the Normans, he persuaded Siward, earl of North Humbria, and Macduff, the marmoer of Fife, to help him with an army to recover the throne of Scotland. Their combined forces defeated Macbeth in a bloody battle near his castle of Dunsinane, in which Siward's own son fell. But the victory was without result: Macbeth escaped and lived and reigned for several years. In feudal warfare a pitched battle seldom effected a conquest. On his death Malcolm quietly succeeded.

About this time the older generation of leaders in England began to pass away. Godwin had died in 1053. Siward followed him in the year after his victory over Macbeth, and Leofric of Mercia in 1057.

The Saxon monarchy would appear to have been suffering a great deal too much from hereditary influences. Edward himself does not seem to have been a man of much force as a military leader; the earldoms, which were becoming offices as hereditary as the crown itself, fell on the death of the older men into the hands of aggressive young earls who inherited all the independence of their fathers, without the experience of invasion which had induced the elder men to moderate their animosities for the common good.

It was a necessity of the times that the earldoms on the borders of Wales and Scotland should be, to a great extent, independent. Godwin's son Harold succeeded to the earldom of Wessex. Alfgar, the son of Leofric, who on Harold's

promotion was given East Anglia, became on his father's death earl of Mercia. For some cause he was twice outlawed in 1055 and 1058. But on both occasions he had sufficient following to force Edward to restore him to his earldoms on making renewal of his allegiance.

These outlawries brought Wales and Ireland into play.

As a refuge for outlawed nobles, and as a place of muster for the Irish mercenaries, Wales was a sharp thorn in the side of the English kingdom. In 1046 Godwin's son Sweyn, then earl of Hereford, had forced from Griffith, king of North Wales, who had made himself master of all Wales for the time, an oath of fealty to Edward. But three years later Griffith, with thirty-six ships of Irish pirates, appeared at the mouth of the Severn and ravaged the adjoining counties. The bishop of Worcester took the field with the men of Gloucester and Hereford and some Welsh allies. The Welsh allies proved traitors, and warned by them Griffith was able to attack the English at daybreak and slaughter them.

Again, when Godwin and his sons were in disgrace, while Harold and Leofwin were in Ireland collecting ships to raid the south coast, the same Griffith took the opportunity to waste Herefordshire. He defeated the Hereford levies and the Frenchmen of the castle (they had already begun their Scandinavian custom of castle building), and went home with great booty.

So naturally on his outlawry in 1055, Alfgar went over to Ireland to engage a fleet of eighteen ships for his assistance, and then sailed to North Wales and allied himself with Griffith.

Alfgar and Griffith with their Welsh and Irish forces marched into Herefordshire, part of Alfgar's earldom, where they were opposed by Earl Ralph the king's nephew. Ralph mounted his force, Norman fashion, on horses. But, either from some panic or some unexplained cause, possibly the difficulty of manœuvring with mounted troops in a rough and wooded country, Ralph's forces fled in rout, and Griffith and Alfgar took Hereford, burnt it with the cathedral, and

retired into Wales with the spoil. On this Edward sent Harold, Godwin's son, who had already shown himself a successful and judicious leader, to punish the offenders.

Harold did not think it worth while to follow Griffith into South Wales. Posting his army so as to check any fresh incursions, he busied himself with fortifying Hereford while he entered into negotiations with his foes. The negotiations resulted in Alfgar's restoration to his earldom; the Irish fleet was sent round to Chester to be paid off. Griffith was not dealt with at the time. Harold probably understood better than many of his contemporaries the difficulties of this mountain warfare, which reproduced the raids of the Picts into Roman Britain, raids not generally worth a counter invasion. In the next year Harold's chaplain Leofgar, who had been appointed bishop of Hereford, took the field against Griffith and was killed with many of his followers.

When Alfgar was outlawed for the second time in 1058 he was assisted not only by Griffith but by a fleet under Magnus of Norway. He forced Edward again to acknowledge him. Griffith again was not immediately dealt with, but at Christmas 1063 Harold with a small force made a sudden raid on Griffith's palace fortress of Rhuddlan in Flintshire, burned the palace and the fleet which was laid up for the winter, and returned to Gloucester, Griffith himself escaping for the time.

In the May following Harold and his brother Tostig began an organised subjection of Wales, laying it waste with land forces, while a fleet from Bristol with provisions accompanied them round the coast. For better work in such a rough country Harold, like the Irish Murketagh, clothed his men in leathern armour and gave them lighter weapons. The smaller chiefs submitted and gave hostages; but Griffith still held out. At last, hemmed in (it is said) in the mountain passes of Snowdon, he was killed by some of his own people, and his head with the ivory prow of his ship was sent by Harold to Edward.

Here ended Wales as a separate and independent king-

dom. From this time her princes appointed by the English kings recognised their supreme authority as suzerains.

Events were fast pointing to Harold, who was conspicuous as much by his diplomacy in dealing with turbulent nobles like Alfgar as by his good generalship in the field, as the successor to the throne of the childless Edward.

Canute had sent the two sons of Edmund Ironside, Edward and Edmund, to the king of the Swedes to be put out of the way. But, as often happens when a man is requested to commit a political murder which brings him no profit, the Swede passed on the young princes to the king of Hungary, who brought them up and protected them. Edmund died. Edward married Agatha, a niece of the German emperor Henry II, and had three children, Christina, Edgar and Margaret, who became afterwards a most important link in British history.

Edward the Confessor, deprived of his Norman friends, bethought him of this Edward as his successor, and invited him to England. He came in 1057, bringing his family, but died almost immediately after landing, leaving his young son Edgar, who probably spoke no English, the last possible male claimant to the throne of Wessex of the blood of Alfred.

II. The Conquest of England

On December 28, 1065, Edward caused the great church of Westminster to be dedicated to St. Peter, and on January 5, 1066, he died and was buried there. Harold, whom he had, say the Chronicles, nominated as his successor, was at once elected by the nobles as king, and was crowned by Aldred, formerly the fighting bishop of Worcester, now archbishop of York. Stigand, the archbishop of Canterbury, who had succeeded the Norman Robert of Jumièges, was passed over.

Harold was not allowed to enjoy his kingdom in quiet. As the Saxon in the past had defended Wessex against the Norwegians of the north-west, and the Danes from Denmark in the east, Harold, himself very largely of Danish blood,

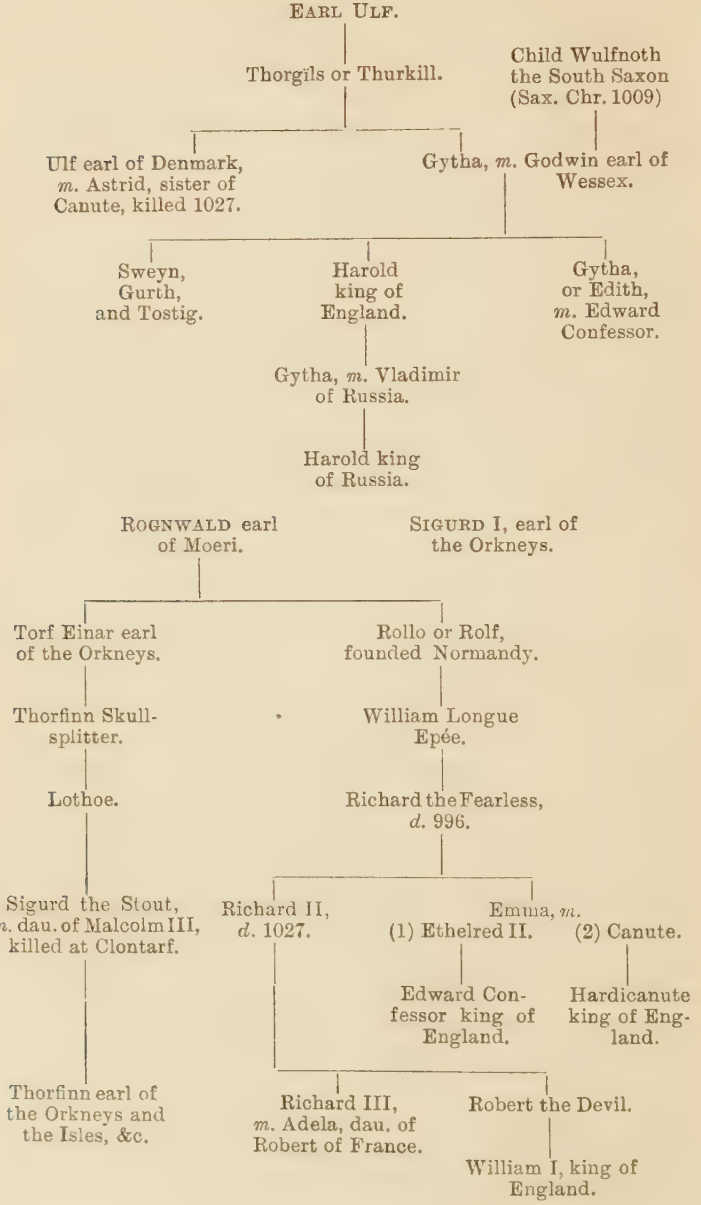
was now to defend all England against two Norwegian invasions, one from the Orkneys and Norway from the north and east, and the other from Normandy in the south.

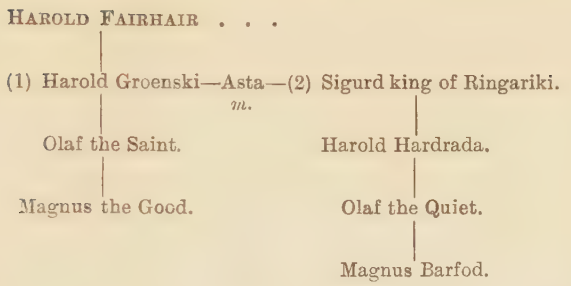
On the death of Siward the North Humbrian earl (leaving a young son Waltheof a minor), the northern earldom had been given to Tostig, Harold's brother. Here he ruled until 1065, when the thanes rose against his rule and ejected him, choosing Morcar, the son of Alfgar, to be their earl. They appealed through Harold to the king, who consented to the change. So Tostig with those who held by him went over to Flanders to Baldwin, whose daughter Judith he had married, and there remained until after Edward's death.

On Harold's election as king, Tostig first tried to form an alliance for invasion with William of Normandy and then with Sweyn of Denmark, both of whom refused him. Lastly he approached Harold Hardrada king of Norway.

This Harold Hardrada was one of the last of those Vikings whose extraordinary adventures and exploits gave such colour of romance to these times. He was a younger half-brother of the Olaf who had joined Ethelred II against Sweyn, had captured London by destroying London Bridge, and had quitted the life of a pirate to become the patron saint of his country and the stern slayer of the pagan.

Harold Hardrada had spent a life of wild adventure in the Baltic and in the Mediterranean as a pirate. He had served as a private soldier in the ranks of the Varangian guard of Scandinavians who guarded the palace of the Eastern emperors. Getting tired of this life, he once more took to the sea, carrying off with him a young woman of good fortune from Constantinople. After long voyaging and plundering, he came again to Norway, and raised an army to make himself king. But as a regular conquest was a matter of some difficulty, an agreement was made for a division of spoil and kingdom. He was now ready for fresh fields to conquer. The offers of Tostig, which had failed to interest William of Normandy and Sweyn of Denmark, were sufficient to gain his alliance. He promised to join Tostig in the invasion of England.


Earl Ulf.
Thorgils or Thurkill.
Child Wulfnoth the South Saxon (Sax. Chr. 1009)
Ulf earl of Denmark, m. Astrid, sister of Canute, killed 1027.
Gytha, m. Godwin earl of Wessex.
Sweyn, Gurth, and Tostig.
Harold king of England.
Gytha, or Edith, m. Edward Confessor.
Gytha, m. Vladimir of Russia.
Harold king of Russia.
Rognwald earl of Moeri.
Sigurd I, earl of the Orkneys.
Torf Einar earl of the Orkneys.
Rollo or Rolf, founded Normandy.
Thorfinn Skull-splitter.
William Longue Epée.
Lothoe.
Richard the Fearless, d. 996.
Sigurd the Stout, m. dau. of Malcolm III, killed at Clontarf.
Richard II, d. 1027.
Emma, m. (1) Ethelred II. (2) Canute.
Edward Confessor king of England.
Hardicanute king of England.
Thorfinn earl of the Orkneys and the Isles, &c.
Richard III, m. Adela, dau. of Robert of France.
Robert the Devil.
William I, king of England.



Tostig, after pillaging along the south coast from the Isle of Wight to Sandwich, sailed North and entered the Humber. Here he was met by the sons of Alfgar, Edwin the earl of the Mercians, and Morcar the earl of the North Humbrians, who drove him out. He then sailed north to Scotland and stayed with Malcolm during the summer, awaiting the arrival of Harold Hardrada. About the middle of September the Norwegian came and the combined fleets sailed south and went up the Ouse to York.

In the meantime another formidable enemy was preparing an invasion of the south coast.

Robert "the Devil," or "the Magnificent," the fifth duke of Normandy in succession from Rollo "the Ganger," followed at the end of a long reign the frequent custom of rulers, and set out in 1035 on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. To leave the dukedom full of turbulent nobles for a distant land, from which it would be unlikely that he should return, must have seemed an act of madness to his contemporaries; the situation was not improved when he named as his successor a bastard child born to him by the daughter of a tanner in the town of Falaise. Such a ruler for a throne where the strong arm and the high prestige was daily required boded very little for the peace of Normandy.

Robert accomplished his pilgrimage, but died on his way home. William the Bastard became duke under the regency of the duke of Brittany. But in spite of the efforts of the

regent to keep order, the duchy in the early years of William's boyhood was the scene of perpetual disorder and unrest. As the young duke grew up he showed determination to grapple with the disorders and insurrections. Robert before his departure had taken the precaution of taking the child to Henry I, king of France, and had obtained his recognition as suzerain of the young child's rights. A suzerain was always glad to have an infant as his feudal tenant, as it gave him the opportunity of armed interference in the affairs of the duchy, besides the lucrative rights of wardship which accrued. A conspiracy being formed against William by his cousin Guy of Burgundy, he claimed the assistance of Henry, and with his help overthrew the rebels in a decisive battle at Val des Dunes, near Caen, in 1047. From that time he ruled his duchy, steadily growing in power and in men's estimation, and enlarging his borders, as every strong man in those days did, at the expense of any weak neighbour. He further strengthened himself by marrying Matilda, the daughter of Baldwin duke of Flanders.

The story in the Chronicles of his courtship of the lady is a strange one, but not so improbable according to the manners of the time. It is said that Matilda, when he asked for her in marriage, answered that she preferred the nunnery to marriage with a bastard. William went to Baldwin's palace at Lille, went in search of Matilda, took her by the hair, dragged her round the chamber, kicked and beat her soundly, and then, mounting his horse, went back to Normandy. This proof of his audacity had such an effect that when he next asked for her hand she accepted him.

The Pope declared the marriage within the prohibited degrees of relationship, but William did not give way, and in the end, through the influence of Lanfranc, abbot of Bec, an Italian monk of great repute, who afterwards became archbishop of Canterbury, he succeeded in obtaining the papal consent.

William now claimed the throne of England, as promised to him by Edward the Confessor. Such a claim, even if there had been any promise, could have no value as against

the choice of the Witan and Edward's nomination of Harold on his deathbed. But several chance circumstances gave him advantage in his claim, and helped to cast around it the mantle of papal approbation, which was yearly acquiring an increasing value.

It will be remembered that Robert of Jumièges, the Norman archbishop, was one of those who had fled to the Continent on the triumph of Godwin. In his place Stigand, a Dane, had been appointed archbishop by the king. This would have satisfied all requirements if Stigand had been able to obtain and pay for his pallium, or pall, the symbolic lamb's fleece, with which the Pope claimed to complete the investiture. Unfortunately, Robert was before him at Rome, and the reigning Pope refused acknowledgment. His successor Benedict gave Stigand the required pall.

But Stigand's lucky star was not in the ascendant. Benedict in his turn had been elected by the Romans without the consent of the Roman emperor in Germany, who claimed the right of nomination. The secular arm in the form of a German army crossed the Alps and swept Benedict away. His successor, Nicholas II, excommunicated him. Stigand had added to the crime of superseding the lawful Robert the infamy of receiving his pall from an unsuccessful antipope.

Henceforth, though he retained his see, he was looked on askance by all Christian men, so that neither Harold nor afterwards Edgar Atheling dared to be crowned by him.

The Western Church was now in the hand of Hildebrand, afterwards in 1073 to become Pope under the name of Gregory VII. Under his influence began the great struggle about "investitures," the right of sovereigns and popes to dispose of ecclesiastical offices. Hildebrand was not the man to suffer the slightest slur on the nominees of the Holy See to pass unnoticed. In the forefront of William's pretensions was his claim as papal agent to punish England for this sacrilege in the person of her archbishop.

Harold himself had furnished a more specious support to William's claim. At some time previously he had, volun-

tarily or perforce, visited William, and had been induced by him to promise to support his claim to the English throne, and to marry his sister. To give sanctity to this promise William called his nobles together, and called on Harold, who was helpless to refuse, to confirm his promise by oath upon some reliquaries. Under the table upon which, covered with a cloth, they lay, William had hidden a tub full of saintly bones and bodies. When Harold had taken his oath the cloth was removed, and the relics on which he had unwittingly sworn were revealed to him.

An oath as such in those days had no special sanctity, especially when the taker was in the power of the man to whom the promise was made. Dispensation from such an oath would easily be granted. But not so with an oath taken on the supposed bones of holy men. The violation of such an oath was the object of the extremest censures of the Church, especially if the interests of the Church happened to point, as they did in this case, in the same direction.

The English had lately cooled in their zeal towards Rome; the authority of the popes was more lightly regarded; their influence in appointments to high offices lessened. Though not a schismatic country, England was far too independent of the Roman See to suit the views of the great popes, who designed that the Church should everywhere rule and appoint its officers. For such a design the succession of a king by hereditary right, endorsed by the papacy, was more favourable than a system of election by the nation.

Add to this the religious fervour which was then sweeping over Europe, strengthening everywhere the hands of the Church, and resulting twenty years later in the first crusade.

There had been a widespread belief that the end of the world would occur in 1000 A.D. When the years passed without the expected end men gave themselves up more freely to the things of this world, the reckless and ambitious indulging in fresh schemes of conquest and pleasure, and the piously inclined redoubling the exercises of religion, and expressing them in that passion for building which

has studded Europe with the great cathedrals, abbeys, and churches which exist to our own day. Men were in the mood to be urged on to reckless engagements both by the spirit of adventure and the fury of religious fanaticism.

Putting all matter of complaint together, William's case was by no means a strong one. But after a conclave in which the result was for a long time doubtful, the Pope issued a bull excommunicating Harold, and sent William a consecrated banner and ring.

William prepared for his adventure, circulating as widely as possible the Papal bull and his own grievances, and offering pay and pillage to all the adventurous blackguards from all parts of France and the South who would join him in his invasion, while Harold Hardrada on his part, like Sitric before Clontarf, was enlisting the piracy of Scandinavia and Flanders. Both soon collected large armies. The pillage of a rich country (and England was undoubtedly very rich) appealed to all the passions of lust and greed both lay and clerical.

A fresh misfortune now befel England. Harold had collected the armed militia of the country, and leaving to Edwin and Morcar the defence of the North, had stationed himself with fleet and land forces on the south coast to prevent William's landing. But all through the summer both North and South waited in vain. The Norwegian was not ready, and the wind prevented the Norman expedition from leaving its harbours.

Harold was at length compelled to allow both fleet and army to go home for harvest, leaving the coast unguarded. Hardly had he done so when Harold Hardrada sailed to the Orkneys, and from thence, accompanied by Paul earl of the Orkneys, his brother Erlend, and the Norse bishop, sailed along the east coast of Scotland, where he was joined by Tostig with a fleet from Flanders. The combined fleets soon appeared in the Humber. Sailing up the Ouse to York, they engaged Edwin and Waltheof, Siward's son, and defeated them, shutting them up in York.

The English king, as soon as the news was brought

to him, flew north with all the men he could collect by extraordinarily rapid marches, and, surprising the Norwegians and Flemings at Stamford Bridge beyond York, defeated them and broke up their force.

Harold Hardrada and Tostig were killed. Olaf, the son of Harold Hardrada, Paul, Erlend, and the bishop of the Orkneys were allowed to return to the Orkneys with the remnants of their force.

But while the English were engaged in destroying the Northern invaders the wind had changed, enabling William to cross the Channel in safety and to land unopposed at Pevensey in Sussex. Once more had the temporary militia service failed for the national defence.

Harold at once left the north with a few chosen troops, sending word west and south to the leaders to meet him in London. From London, in spite of the advice of the leaders that he should wait a few days and collect the forces now on their way to join him, he pushed on to Hastings.

If he hoped to repeat the surprise of Stamford Bridge, William had left no opening for it. He had on landing erected a wooden castle which had been brought over in pieces, and had thrown out pickets on all sides. Harold's force was so much smaller than that of the Normans, besides being, we must be sure, excessively fatigued by their rapid marches, that he was unable, for all his speed, to take the offensive. He drew up his forces on a hill about seven miles from Hastings and awaited the Norman attack, which was delivered on the morning of the 14th October 1066.

During the first few hours the Normans made no impression on the Saxon defence; the armoured mounted knights failed to break the ring of picked soldiers who, armed with the heavy battleaxe, fought on foot around Harold's standard; the archers failed to pierce their shields. A feint of retreat drew some of the less steady from their positions and drove them back in disorder, but it made no impression on the more disciplined bodyguard. Late in the afternoon the battle was still undecided when William

directed his archers to shoot their arrows high into the air, so that they should fall in the faces of the Saxons.

This strange venture would possibly have had as little effect as the feigned retreat had not an arrow by chance pierced the eye of Harold and penetrated to the brain. His brothers Girth and Leofwin had both fallen, and his death left the English without a leader. The Normans succeeded in breaking the circle, planting the consecrated banner where Harold's standard had flown. The Saxons stubbornly retreated until night closed.

The battle decided the fate of England, and through England of all Britain. There was no man left round whom the nation would rally. The young Edgar the Atheling was put forward, but Edwin and Morcar, representing the power of the North, though they assented to his nomination, gave no active support. Mercia and North Humbria were still half independent and unfriendly to South Wessex. After a few weeks' hesitation, William, who had gone back to Hastings to await events, when he saw that he might expect further fighting, moved his force through Kent along the Thames, fortifying all places of importance as he passed with wooden castles, until he came to Berkhampstead, where he was met by Archbishop Aldred of York, Edgar, Edwin, Morcar, and the chief men of London, with an offer of the crown. He was crowned at Westminster by Aldred on Christmas Day, as the legitimate successor of Edward, taking the usual oath to govern well and justly.

III. After the Conquest

In Lent 1067 William returned to Normandy, taking with him all those who were likely in his absence to create disturbance, Stigand, Edgar, Edwin, Morcar, Waltheof, the abbot of Glastonbury, and others; and leaving behind him in command his half-brother Odo bishop of Bayeux, and William Fitz Osbert, who took precautions against any risings by building castles in towns, and at commanding points in the country.

In the first instance, the castle consisted of making a deep trench and a palisade of sharp stakes round any building or high ground which was defensible. Afterwards the palisade was replaced or reinforced by a square "keep" or courtyard, with walls of wood or stone pierced with narrow slits for archery.

This practice of castle-building, to which was due a great deal of the success of the Scandinavians, preceded by a very long time the perfection of the military machines for taking them, so that a few well-armed and well-provisioned horsemen, with a well of water, could hold out for a long time against a besieging force, and could sally out to harry and plunder the surrounding country when the besiegers were forced to break up the siege for want of provisions. The well of water was a prime necessity. Often the men of the castles were starved out for want of water for their beasts and for themselves.

Such castles, as they became more permanent, made the great nobles who built and occupied them independent of the king, unless he were strong enough and determined enough to have them entirely in his own hands or in the hands of men whom he could control. The wars and disputes of the next four centuries consist for the most part of a transfer of these castles from the one side to the other, either by famine, or by treachery or false cunning, or very rarely by assault.

To the common people the castles were undoubtedly a terror and an oppression, aggravating the sufferings of the Saxons which followed the Conquest. To the women especially this suffering must have been very great. The horde who followed William into England from the lands outside Normandy, low-born, broken men and adventurers from all parts of Western and South-Western Europe, settled upon the conquered lands as lords, often making a double title by taking as wife or concubine the well-born Saxon women, whose men had fallen in battle against the invader.

There were no bounds, except fear of assassination, or

the restraint of military discipline, to the barbarities or greed of such men as these. The mere handful who fought at Hastings were followed in the next twenty years by numbers who, like the carpet-baggers in South Carolina after the American Civil War, rushed in to share the plunder which others had won for them.

The chroniclers are loud in their general denunciation of oppression and cruelty. How far they were general or mere isolated instances, we can only guess. A conquered people, especially when conquered by their own apathy and disunion, their belief that the blessings of peace can be won without their own military service, must expect to suffer from oppression. Each fresh local rising against the little garrison of "castle men" by those who had been incapable of united effort in the first instance, provoked more severe retaliation, and a wider distinction between the races than need have been. Cruel and barbarous as many acts of a savage soldiery must have been, the condition of England even then was better under the strong hand of a firm ruler, than that of any other part of the island.

The annals of Ireland after Clontarf exhibit for centuries only a long catalogue of aimless murders and vulgar arson. If the conditions of the island under English rule was sad, it was less sad than when the only bright event recorded was (as in 1066) that there was a good nut year, and that the pigs had plenty of mast. There was no history worth recording. The same remark applies to Wales.

That in spite of incidents of brutality and oppression William gave good order in return for the heavy taxation of which the chroniclers complain, order which sent England flying forward in the paths of real progress, the Saxon chronicler acknowledges when at William's death he recorded the "good peace that he made in this land." That he gave up his own peace and his own pleasure to enforce sternly a cessation of bickering and strife is the highest praise which in this or any age can be given by friend or enemy to a ruler.

Luckily for Britain, the "good peace" was continued,

with some intervals of disorder, under his sons and successors, until the benefits resulting from it became so marked that the power both of the nobles and of the Church were enlisted to preserve it. Through this happy condition Great Britain has remained a country in which order and obedience to the law are pre-eminently preserved by the people themselves.

But good order required money in the eleventh century as in our own day. The heavy taxation was the more likely to be resented, as William's hand was very heavy on the monasteries, both as centres of Saxon disaffection, and as banks and deposit vaults to which, in those times of disorder, rich men committed their wealth for safe keeping. In 1070 he harried all the minsters, and at the same time replaced Saxon bishops and abbots by Normans or other foreigners.

In case of oppression the wretched could not look with any hope of help to the Norman priest or monk. He differed little from the soldier. The Conqueror soon found it to be a military necessity to expel the Saxon ecclesiastic, whether bishop, abbot, or priest, as a centre of disaffection, and to replace him by foreigners who could be relied upon to do military duty, and to act as spies upon the conquered.

The office of bishop or abbot, especially upon the borders, was then, and for long after, in the first place that of a military tenant of the crown. For example, in 1241, in the reign of Henry III, Grossetête, the great bishop of Lincoln, one of the most devoted of churchmen, urges Nicholas de Farnham to accept the bishopric of Durham offered to him, on the ground that if he does not the king would appoint some foreigner or unworthy and ignorant man, to the danger of the kingdom, as the castles of the bishopric, Norham and Durham, were the bulwarks of England in the north—not a word of the spiritual aspect of the office.[1] In like manner the bishops of Hereford and

[1] *Grossetête's Letters*, R. & M.

Worcester kept watch and ward on the frontiers of Wales.

It was a necessary result of the extreme reformation movement in the Church which was going forward at the time of the Conquest, that there was no place for moderate men in the ministry. The chief offices were filled either by enthusiastic fanatics, or by men who held their offices as military tenants of the king. As illustrations of the worst side of the foreign clergy (the better will be referred to later on), there are two stories in the Saxon Chr., both to be taken with due regard to inevitable exaggerations.

In 1083 a foreigner, Thurstan, had been appointed abbot of Glastonbury. He insisted on novelties in singing, alterations in food, and so forth, which were repugnant to the monks. To enforce his will he brought in soldiers to coerce the monks, who locked themselves into the church, and took refuge round the high altar. The abbot's troops from the clerestory shot down at the monks round the altar, killing two or three and wounding some eighteen. The matter was brought to the king's notice. He removed the abbot, who afterwards bought back his abbacy for £500, and he dispersed the monks among other abbacies, placing them, as the chronicler says, in custody. In another instance a jocular abbot made a feast for his Saxon monks, providing them with meats forbidden by their vows, served by half-naked women with dishevelled hair.

From such doings there was only one court of appeal, to the Conqueror himself. He might desire justice, but judging between the men of his small garrison, which hardly held but a small part of the country, and those whom they were said to have wronged, he was unlikely to take the Saxon side unduly. Lanfranc the Lombard, his archbishop and metropolitan, might be a moral and politic churchman, but he would hardly take the part of a Saxon priest whom he would guess to be the secret correspondent of a new insurrection, and who might even be a married man, against the Italian or Poitevin, who, a celibate but keeping his concubine, represented the papacy and the reformation of the Church.

Undoubtedly to gain the "good peace" William punished disorder with no light hand.

In those days the only force that could be called government at all, was the will of a strong mind. When the king was gentle or pleasure-loving or artistic or pious, and held the reins loosely, in the place of individual cases of injustice the whole people suffered the oppression of anarchy.

William as a young man had had a double experience of the evils of weak rule. He had seen Edward helpless in the hands of his nobles, ruled by Godwin, by Leofric, and by Siward; and he had passed his own youth fighting for pre-eminence, learning the lesson of which his rule in England was the fruit, that the supremacy of the crown over the lesser rulers was an essential for peace, justice, and order. Hence he kept the castles in his hands, scattered the possessions of his followers, and modified the continental system of feudal relationship between the lord and his tenant by obliging all holders of land to swear fealty to himself as well as to the intermediate lord, so that in the event of a quarrel between himself and their lord he could call on the tenants of the lord for assistance to him as against their immediate master.

For ten years after Hastings William was engaged in quelling risings of the English or of his own followers, or defeating invasions of the Welsh or Scots.

Harold's sons made several unsuccessful attempts on the west from Ireland; inroads of the Welsh princes were checked by the erection of castles along the borders, and by the establishment of courts with independent authority at Chester and Shrewsbury. This border warfare was defensive only, the power of the Norman extending very little beyond the castle walls.

The repeated rebellions in the north, hatched in Scotland and aided by fleets from Denmark, were a much more serious matter, provoking most cruel retaliation. The greatest danger occurred when, in 1069, the sons of Sweyn of Denmark brought a large fleet into the Humber, in concert with Edgar Atheling and the Danish earls of North

Humbria. They burnt the newly-erected castle at York and slew the Norman soldiers. Then the Danish fleet lay all winter in the Humber "where the king could not get at them."

William, when he came to the north, got rid of them by the old expedient of paying them a good sum to go, giving them permission to forage and plunder along the rebellious coast on their way. Then he laid waste the whole of Northumberland, Durham, and Yorkshire, destroying crops and killing man and beast, so as to produce a great famine, and devastation so terrible that "it is said" the country never fully recovered until the industrial revival of the eighteenth century.

Following this, in the face of mutinous troops and severe wintry weather, he made a march across the moors to Chester to stamp out any concerted rising in the west from Man and Ireland.

After this the only English opposition William had to meet was in the Isle of Ely, a real island in those times, where, protected by the waters, the few who declined to submit made a last stand against him under one Hereward. At length by building a causeway two miles in length across the fens, cutting off by a fleet any succour from the sea, William, aided by the treachery of the monks, who tired of the hardships of the defence, succeeded in reducing the island.

He diverted the energies of the English by leading them in his army to France to invade Maine, his province south of Normandy, which had revolted from him.

But, though the English were quiescent, he had to meet the conspiracies of his own men. A plot was hatched at a marriage feast of Ralph, earl of Norfolk, in which Waltheof, Earl Siward's son, who had married the niece of the Conqueror, was implicated. Waltheof repented and told of the plot, and the garrisons in the castles prevented the outbreak from coming to a head. Waltheof was executed and Ralph fled.

After this William spent the greater part of his time in

Normandy, where his quarrels with his eldest son, Robert, and the king of France, who supported him, required his presence, save when the affairs of Scotland or Wales called him back.

IV. The Saxons in Scotland

After the collapse of the resistance in Ely, William invaded Scotland by land and sea, "finding," says the Chronicle, "nothing by which he was the better." Malcolm met him at Abernethy, gave hostages, and did fealty as his man. But his oath of fealty did not prevent Malcolm from raiding the north as far as the Tyne a few years later.

The co-operation of army and navy was for a long time a necessity in any invasion of Scotland, as the country north of the Humber was not capable of finding food for any large army. If William had not wasted the land between the Tees and the Humber, and Malcolm that between the Tees and the Forth, it is very likely that an invasion of Scotland would soon have brought all the island under one rule. But so large a space of waste lay between the Humber and the Forth, and there was so little worth fighting for beyond, that for centuries the English expeditions into Scotland were only raids to plunder, to revenge incursions, and to protect the borders.

When we speak of Scotland at this time, it must be remembered that the term covers only a Pictish kingdom from the Forth to the Moray Firth on the east, with a partly independent outpost in Lothian, and on the west the indefinite appanage of Strathclyde, keeping open a waterway to the west without the necessity of sailing round the Orkneys and Shetlands, but hemmed in by the Northmen of Argyll on the north and of Galloway on the south. All the rest of modern Scotland was in the hands of the Northmen ruling variously from Orkney, Man, Argyll or Dublin.

The failure of the risings in the north had driven Edgar Atheling with his two sisters Christina and Margaret with many English refugees to the court of Malcolm. This resulted in a marriage between Malcolm and Margaret—

"Saint" Margaret—a woman who had apparently a title to the name of Saint.

I do not know in all British history a prettier episode than the story of the life of St. Margaret and her husband as told by her confessor and biographer, told without so many of those unnecessary miracles which deface the lives of most saints.

Margaret, with the positive authority of youth, set at once about changing the ecclesiastical conditions of the country according to the ideas in which she had been brought up in Hungary, so as to bring Scotland into line with the rest of Europe in all that pertained to the distinctive usages of the Roman Church. Coming from one of the richest and most magnificent courts in Christendom to one of the poorest, the first act of the young wife was to establish workshops for embroidering tapestry for the decoration of the fortress, and for metal work in gold and silver. Her devotion to Rome not only showed itself in the multiplication of religious houses, and the establishment of ferries to take pilgrims across the Forth to the abbey of St. Andrews but she entered into argument with the Scottish priests on the right keeping of Easter and other divergencies from the general usage, with the help of her husband Malcolm as interpreter.

The mutual affection, and the admiration on which it was based is very touching, Malcolm, the rough king, who had seen more polished courts in his youth, sustaining and protecting his young wife in all her innovations, whether it was in womanly arts, in arguments with priests, in works of mercy and charity, or in improving the means of communication across the lochs. She in return gave him the affection and respect due to a man many years her senior, of strong will and earnest purpose. Their lives may be said to have been spent (apart of course from the periodic raids over the border) in trying to improve in every respect the condition of the people over whom they ruled.

Their sons, who succeeded them, increased the possessions and power of the throne of Scotland. Through their daughter

Matilda, who became queen of Henry I, the Conqueror's third son, and their grand-daughter Maud, the queen of Stephen, the line of Alfred once more touched the English throne.[1]

The effect on Scotland itself of the marriage was very marked, changing altogether the racial balance in the kingdom. The king was not himself such a barbarian as his Pictish subjects, as he had spent so many years in exile at the court of Edward the Confessor, or with Siward in North Humbria, during the reign of Macbeth, so that the introduction of English blood easily inclined him to his southern territory of Lothian, which for more than a century remained the refuge of English and northern malcontents, rather than to his Pictish subjects north of the Forth.

Henceforward, up to the time of the Reformation, Scotland marches step by step with England, her government modified only by the weakness of central authority which enabled the feudal tenants to defy the crown—a great testimony to the order and peace introduced into England by William.

The king in Scotland, though steadily encroaching on his Norse neighbours, was never strong enough to put down the disorderly noble, or to insist on obedience to the laws. We must not forget that the Stuarts came to the throne of England without any previous training for constitutional government. They had ruled for many generations a rebellious people by brute force and insincere diplomacy. And to hardly one of them had been vouchsafed at the hands of their people a natural death.

[1] See *infra*, Chapter XXVII.

CHAPTER XX

THE SOURCES OF REVENUE

National defence and good peace needed money in the eleventh as in the twentieth century; and its exaction was as unpopular then as it is now. Each man on whom the burden falls tries in all ages to shift as much of it as possible on to the shoulders of others, finding fault the while with the fact and mode of its exaction.

As old sources of revenue fail, and new ones touching a new class of men are brought into play, the cry goes up from the new class, who find themselves aggrieved at the novelty of having to contribute towards national order and defence against external foes. As the burden increases, they join with other classes to resist payment of taxes, which they call "tyranny," or they continue to put the payment on others, which they call "liberty."[1]

The war of words and occasional acts and revolutions which attend these shiftings of financial obligations make up what is called constitutional history.

The king, whether tribal or feudal, was in the eleventh

[1] Historians are generally so much concerned with the disputes over the collection of taxes that they hardly condescend to notice the fact that "liberty" is solely freedom of the person from seizure without open and fair trial, and "tyranny" the enactment of unjust or immoral laws, or the illegal and arbitrary administration in the courts of law of laws which are in themselves innocuous. This may involve questions of taxation: it sometimes does: as, for instance, if a man whose own income is not liable to pay income tax and who does not know of his wife's income, was seized and imprisoned for not paying her income tax. The vulgar mind can conceive a dispute about money which cannot rise to comprehend resistance to arbitrary power for conscience' sake or for patriotism. "For this is not the liberty which we can hope, that no grievances should ever arise in the commonwealth—that let no man in this world expect: but when complaints are freely heard, deeply considered, and speedily reformed —then is the utmost bound of civil liberty obtained that wise men look for."—Milton, *Areopagitica*.

century, as to this day he remains in theory, the source of all administrative action in the State. He built ships, built and repaired castles and fortresses, made roads and bridges. He administered justice in his court, raised armies and led them, regulated commerce and the admission of aliens, appointed all State officials, including the Church dignitaries, as his ministers do to this day in his name.

He managed and farmed his own vast landed estates, and where the feudal military system had been introduced, during the minority of any of his military tenants their landed estates, and he supervised and regulated the uses of the lands in forest.

It will easily be seen that a king with such multifarious occupations would be perpetually on the move, that he must delegate his powers freely to a multitude of assistants, and that he must provide the means for paying them, and for the necessities of his administration.

So entirely were all public acts identified with the person of the king or chief, that one account sufficed for his public outgoings as the person responsible for the public welfare and for his private personal expenses. We have very full particulars from the reign of Henry II onwards of the proceedings in England of the King's Court of Exchequer, the model for all other parts of the islands. In fact, our knowledge of financial matters after the Conquest is greatly dependent on this authority.

It was a highly organised instrument of collection and disbursement through which passed all receipts and payments. All the various debits of all the different departments of national work, the corn, horseshoes, arms or ships for war, the repairs of churches, roads or bridges, all the small spendings of the king's personal necessities, the ornaments for his private chapel, the alms given to the poor, the money spent in entertainment of ambassadors, the king's shoes, or the petticoat for a female prisoner of State, came into one account in the Exchequer. Whether society was national or tribal the system was the same.

Though they were here accounted for, the greater part of all the dues and payments which made up the incomes of the kings and chiefs were spent in kind in the locality which owed them. The earl or chief is credited in the account with the amount of the tribute paid to the king, but no money passes, any more than money passes at the present day between London and New York except to strike a balance.

Men who owed military service paid it in that way; others by work or provisions. About the time when Henry I came to the throne, these payments in kind were beginning in England to be very partially changed into money payments; but only in England, and there only very partially. As late as the fifteenth century, when the earl of Kildare, Lord-Justice of Ireland, bought a medical manuscript for twenty kine, money was hardly in use in Ireland outside the seaboard towns.

In the Exchequer Rolls of Scotland (of later date, as the exchequer system was borrowed from England), rents were paid in kind, in sheep in the Lothians, cheese in Forfar, swine and cattle, poultry and malt; Robert Bruce building his castle at Tarbert, providing for the carriage of lime and working of iron, pays labour in cheese and barley meal. Much later there is record of payment in Ayr herrings and haddocks, Forfar eels, Crail rabbits, Isle of Man porpoises, Perth salmon, and so forth.

The payment of cash even in England was exceptional. In 5 Stephen, Onti of Lincoln paid in 100 Norway hawks and girfalcons, 4 hawks and 6 girfalcons to be white. In 9 John, William de Braose paid 300 cows, 30 bulls, and 10 mares *pro habenda loquela* (slander).

Where money was paid it was by weight, and if the purity of the coin was questioned it was melted and tested.

The collection of the revenue rested in the hands of the king's officers, or was farmed out to various agents, who paid to the king a lump sum, and collected what they could squeeze out in the king's name and to his detriment. Under such a system, similar to that existing in Persia

at the present day, a good many coins stick to the bottom of the tax-farmer's measure.[1] This farming of the revenue is as old as society itself. It was universal. Direct collection of taxes only co-exists with rapid and easy communication, and such certainty of result that the collector can be paid by a fixed salary. In the early middle ages there was little direct taxation, and what there was was fitful, such as special aids at uncertain times for expeditions against an outside enemy.

The king's sources of revenue were of a most miscellaneous description, of such a nature that the collection involved alarming waste and invited peculation, often leaving the king open to criticism for extortion, when in fact he had received little benefit.

Such a system might be made to work roughly well for internal affairs of State, especially when collection and disbursement could be put in the hands of men trusted by the king, and at the same time acceptable to the local authorities. Even here there was an imminence of constant friction, owing to attempted evasions of payment, especially on the part of the clerics, and real extortion by the king's agents, paid not by salary, but by fees and percentages.

For any continuous effort for war from without, which from time to time came as a necessary evil to a king who had large continental possessions, the system was very ill-fitted indeed.

To meet expenses, and at the same time to be prepared for war, needed a king who practised strict economy. That the Norman kings were careful administrators of their revenues is shown by the reproach levelled against every English king in turn from the Conqueror to Henry III (with the exceptions of Stephen and Richard) of being avaricious, parsimonious, fond of money. In John's time the whole system broke down utterly, covering him with historical abuse, and leading to a practice of nagging

[1] Commenting on Magnus Barfod's expedition to Ireland in 1103, Ordericus Vitalis tells us that a rich citizen of Lincoln (no doubt a Scandinavian) kept his treasure, and supplied him with arms and what else he required.

between the king and the taxpayers, and continuous insurrections and civil wars, which lasted, except in those cases where the king was strong enough to impose his personal will on the nation, until the final explosion in the seventeenth century.

The different sources of revenue cannot be treated here in detail. It is sufficient to say that the only regular sources of revenue were the profits from the royal or demesne estates of the king, lands scattered over every part of the country; payment to the king from the sheriffs and other officials, who collected money from the counties for various privileges conferred or exemptions from royal jurisdiction allowed; similar payments in respect of licences to trade, or powers of civil or criminal jurisdiction granted to towns; and the fines and bribes arising from proceedings in the king's courts. Danegeld, we know, was raised in England in 1114. Like our modern income tax, it was far too lucrative and convenient a tax to be abandoned when the cause of its infliction had ceased.

Besides these there were a considerable number of very valuable irregular windfalls, whose very uncertainty, both of value and time, gave to the king a demoralising opportunity to cultivate popularity, both by waste and show. Such were in feudal territory the profits arising from the right of the king to administer the lands of his tenant during the minority of the heir, encouraging him to encroach on the capital, and to leave the estate poorer than he found it, or to delay the investiture of the heir when of age in order to take the profits for a while longer; the right of marrying a female heiress, encouraging the king to sell her, body and soul, to some unfit person for the higher bid, or to take from her a heavy bribe for permission to exercise her free choice of her master; escheats, the right to seize the estates of persons attainted for treason to the king, leading directly to civil war by making it to the king's interest to foment disturbance, until, by driving nobles into rebellion, he could safely seize their estates; aids, which the king could claim from feudal

tenants to redeem him from captivity, to make his eldest son a knight, and to provide a marriage portion for his eldest daughter; and various small perquisites, as one may call them, such as the customs on goods entering certain ports, the right, for example, to one cask before the mast and one behind the mast from every ship laden with wine which came to the port of London; treasure trove, a right of considerable value in days when there were no banks or investments; and right to wreckage, as against the survivors from the might of the sea.

To these must be added uncertain profits of very great value depending on a competition price, the payments for offices of all descriptions as they became vacant lay and clerical, from the justiciary and the archbishop to the small clerkship, payments which reveal how far the profits of administration went into hands other than those of the king.

In the hands of an honest king, and most of them were indifferent honest, this sale of preferment did not act as badly as it looks. For the man who had given a sum of solid cash, borrowed at eighty per cent. from the Jews, for his lay or clerical office, was liable to be removed by the king for ill-behaviour, and he would take care to walk delicately. The danger lay not so much in the venality of office; all justice, all protection was bought: the difficulty arose when a king (such as Richard I), following a practice of the papacy, sold the same office several times over to different men, and watched for an opportunity to dislodge the man in possession.

There was evil attached to these valuable accidents of national revenue then, as to the death-duties exacted by modern governments. Escheats, wardship, marriage, and sale of offices were, it is true, comparatively free from the worst aspect of the death-duties, the deliberate eating up of the national reserves of capital. But they shared in common with the modern windfall the bad effect of encouraging reckless spending by the nation on unnecessary objects, of appearing valiant or prodigal of treasure at other men's expense; they represented no national effort; nor could the

kings when counting the cost of their wars reckon on their amount or their continuance.

There were certain kingly payments which may or may not have enured to the king's benefit—scutage, as it was called, a money payment taken first by William Rufus, in the place of the forty days' service which were owed to him by his feudal tenants for war; this would not necessarily be any source of revenue, as the money would have to be laid out in payment of mercenary soldiers to take the place of the tenant who paid the money. It was open to the king, however, and he not infrequently practised it, I believe, to make a peace with his enemy to save expense, when he had got the payments, even if he did not know beforehand that there would be peace; in the event of war he could hire Welsh and Irish mercenaries cheaply with the money.

Another such payment was purveyance, the right of the chief or king in all parts of Britain, as he moved about his dominions, to impress wagons and horses, and to seize provisions for his court, on a fixed payment, a right liable to excessive abuse by non-payment or insufficient payment, leading to much trouble in England in the seventeenth century.

Yet another was the revenue from fines and penalties in the king's courts of justice, undoubtedly a very great source of revenue, capable of almost indefinite expansion, as it is at this day. But a part of this must have been expended in payment of administration, and still more must have stuck to the hands of the justices and clerks of the Chancery. You not only need to grease the hub of the wheel, but you must put a little oil on the harness.

To get any just conception of the characters and motives of the kings, clerics, and barons who acted in the British dramas of the next five hundred years, you must bear in mind that the court, the responsibilities, the sources of revenue, and expenditure of the feudal king in England or Scotland, of the Irish ardri or prince of Wales, found their counterpart, with a lesser degree of prestige and splendour, in the establishments of the earls, barons, or lesser chiefs, and the great ecclesiastics.

Subject to the modification of tribal customs, each under-king or lord had his own court with his right of "pit and gallows"; his own towns which paid him tallages; each exacted in his courts fines and pecuniary penalties, and took bribes to sell, delay, or deny justice; each had his estates, with its escheats and rights of wardship and marriage; his little army, from which he might exact scutage in place of service; his lands to farm, his offices for sale. There was instant and incessant conflict between the king's rights and revenues and the rights and revenues of the barons and clergy.

On no point was this conflict more severe than on the question of the right to hold courts and try criminals. And on no point up to Magna Charta in 1215 did the rights of the kings more steadily increase at the expense of his aristocracy. The dispute between the king and the clergy as to the right of clerks to be exempt from trial in the civil courts developed into the great quarrel between Henry and Becket; the conflicting interests of the king and the barons are shown by the demand of the barons for "sua jura" before they will acknowledge John's accession, and by the clauses in Magna Charta which limit the practices which had gradually grown up since William's time in the courts.

There are two very important branches of revenue which have not been referred to, which deserve chapters to themselves as much on account of the misrepresentation of fact and motive as for the importance of the subjects. These two productive subjects were the forests and the Jews.

The author is conscious of a difficulty in setting forth in general terms for the whole islands even the first elements of financial order, which it is of the first importance that a reader of later history should understand. The head of the tribe or collection of tribes in Ireland, Wales, Scotland, or Northern England was but a member of the tribe with an acknowledged position as leader and a larger share of the common land, his powers of oppression of his men being closely limited by customary law more strong than any legislation.

The feudal customs which ate up tribal uses were subject to no such limitations. It was to the interest of all, the king, the tenant *in capite*, and the inferior tenant to squeeze in turn the men below them until they provoked the revolutions of the thirteenth and later centuries, and the influences of the times all helped to increase the power of those who could give orders.

As history progresses there comes an ever-widening breach between the finance of the Norman and Angevin kings and the Scots who copied them, bound by no law except the weakness of feudal forces or the anathema of the Church, and the acknowledged customs which checked and at the same time weakened the powers of the rulers in all other parts of the islands. It is very difficult to distinguish in adequate technical language the character common to both.

The reader must then bear in mind that from the statement of the sources of revenue there is one very large exception, namely this, that the military system based on land introduced and perfected by William existed only in England, and that its accidents of revenue, wardship, marriage, and so forth, were not part of the revenue of tribal kings. Very soon the Norman example was imitated by the king of the Scots, who found that the system gave him a more certain and better disciplined force against his Norse or Norman foes.

The system differed from the tribal militia of the rest of the islands in this, that each baron-in-chief owed the king forty days' military service in each year, not as part of a national militia called out by the king and the chiefs, a force over which the king could have little control, but as the condition on which the baron held his "feud" or estate in lands from the Crown. The military tenants in turn who held from the baron-in-chief owed to him the same service, and so on in a descending line.

The system which obtained on the Continent had the advantage of knitting society together for defence against invasion, in a far more perfect form than the Saxon levy of

the fyrd, which it did not entirely supersede. Indeed this national militia remained a part of the British military force until it was destroyed by the Army Act of 1909.

As practised on the Continent there were several drawbacks to this feudal system. The king received the oath of fealty from the great barons-in-chief, the officers of his court, the earls, the archbishops and bishops and abbots, and he could call them into the field with a certain number of followers. But he had no relations with their military tenants, who in their turn swore fealty to them. In consequence a powerful baron or cleric with many feudal estates, such as the duke of Normandy, in rebellion against his own lord, the king of France, could bring into the field an army of his own inferior tenants at his back.

The existence of these conditions on the Continent must be kept steadily in mind by anyone interested in the wars waged by the English kings in Aquitaine, Normandy, or Brittany. Except as regarded their feudal obligation of service and the incidents of marriage, wardship, &c., attached to it, the French or Provençal noble was entirely independent of the king's authority. Supported by his little army of retainers he lived the life of an independent sovereign, turning his aims freely against his own sovereign on any fancied insult or encroachment on his independence. Hence sometimes the sudden helplessness of the English kings in Normandy or in Aquitaine, when they failed to play off one insubordinate baron against another; hence the collapse of their authority altogether, as with Henry II in 1188–9 and with John in 1203–4.

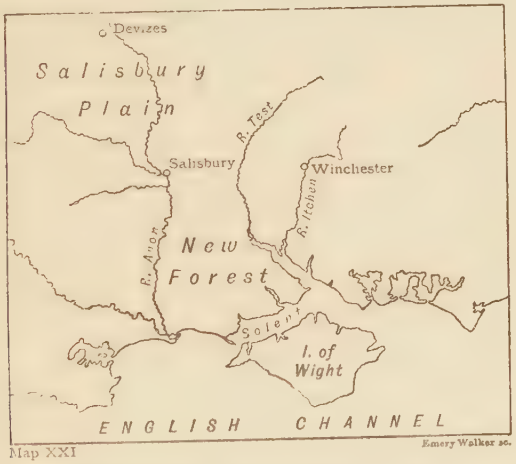
William, who had had much experience of these feudal relations with his own barons in Normandy, while he had witnessed the breakdown of the Saxon militia system, guarded, in organising the conquered England, against this danger, thus laying the foundations of any British liberties which we have.

First, he took pains, when rewarding his followers, to give them estates scattered so far apart that, in the event of rebellion, he could deal with the forces of one at a time.

Next he made a new departure in feudal practice, keep-

ing in view, as a crafty and economical king, the revenues of the Crown as well as its safety. Taking advantage of an abortive invasion of Canute, king of Denmark in 1085, to meet which he had imported into England a large army of mercenaries (of whom more hereafter), William called all the military tenants together at a great assembly on Salisbury Plain, and caused all to swear fealty to him as well as to their immediate lord, so that they should all hold their feuds directly of the Crown.

To complete his new system he caused to be made a



Map XXI

NEW FOREST AND SALISBURY PLAIN

general survey, called the Domesday Survey, of all lands, men, animals, and articles of property in England, excepting only the northern counties of Northumberland and Durham, which he had wasted, and Westmoreland and Cumberland on the west, which were in the possession of the king of the Scots as part of the kingdom of Strathclyde.

Though doubtless very imperfect, for the local juries who acted under the commissioners would be subject to local rather than to national influence, the knowledge obtained enabled the king the more effectually to apportion taxation, to see that no landowner escaped military service, especially

to keep a check on the exemption of Church lands and on Church courts which diminished his revenues.

The record of this survey written in the Domesday books operated then to settle titles to property, and to give the kings a hold over the owners of the land. And it gives us to-day a knowledge of the social conditions of the times, the classes of owners and labourers, the different kinds of tenancy, the military tenant and the tenant by rent only or socage, or by some special service such as the rearing and delivery of hawks or greyhounds, the slave and the half slave or villein, the mills and the fishponds, the fences and the rights of way, and the cattle and other animals.

CHAPTER XXI

THE SOURCES OF REVENUE (*continued*)

I. The Forests

A very interesting and important feature of the Domesday Survey is the enumeration of the forest lands, especially interesting because of the persistent misrepresentation by the monastic chroniclers of the king's dealings with the forests. They speak of them as if these vast reserves of public lands, containing the timber necessary for the whole country for ship-building, house-building, mining, manufactures, fencing, and firing, were intended for no other use than to form parks for the sport of kings.[1] We have no detailed account of their real uses, since the trustworthy writer, like Roger of Hoveden, who in the time of Henry II had been an official of the forest, takes it for granted that the uses of the forest were known, and only incidentally gives account of them. Our knowledge of their uses is dependent on the provisions of the laws themselves and on casual notices in the chronicles and annals of monasteries.

That places were subject to the forest laws and were called forest did not necessarily mean that the district was covered with trees, nor was it in the first instance any such place.

For a long time after the monks had set the example of tilling the soil, agriculture was the exception; stock-breed-

[1] A charge which might have some appearance of truth when Manwood wrote of them some five hundred years later. The strict administration of forest law was necessary not only to preserve food for animals, but to protect the young timber from the depredations of the deer. When the forests ceased to be the main source of food for animals the damage done by the deer to the young trees would operate strongly against their use for sport only. At the present day in Germany, the model for the world of forest administration, a little bit of lime or some thread is put into the bud of the young spruce to prevent the deer from eating it out.

ing and hunting were the chief occupations of those who dealt with land. Those parts of Western Europe were most sought after for habitation which were most suitable as breeding-grounds for tame and wild animals; for such breeding-grounds quiet and freedom from molestation of man or other wild beasts was a necessity; the existence of swamps[1] or depressions surrounded by brake or jungle not easily entered without note of warning, and so situated that natural obstacles of rock or water could form stands to which the hunter could drive game, was one of the first considerations in choosing a place of settlement.

It was a prime necessity that game should be plentiful and that the country should be suitable for stock-breeding. So when the Northmen went out to colonise other worlds they chose for their first settlements those parts where there was no corn growing, Iceland and the Faroes and the western isles of Britain, and all such places as were plentifully supplied with wild beasts and birds and fish, where cattle and sheep and pigs could range and find food for themselves, and where sheltered spots by water would make a warm retreat for winter.

The first and chief use of forest land then was as a breeding-place for animals, tame and wild, that could be used for food.

No meadow or pasture, in the modern sense of the word, then existed. Writing four hundred years later, Fitzherbert in his *Book of Husbandry* speaks of "quyche" hay "that commeth of a grasse called crofote" (our couch or twitch) as the best hay for horses and beasts. Feed for animals of all kinds consisted of the wild grasses in the forest, the leaves and young shoots of the trees, and the "mast,"[2] the acorns, beech nuts, and other fruits which fell from them.

Grass under trees is not only small in quantity, but lacks

[1] Such as exist on Waccamaw Neck in South Carolina.

[2] Anglo-Saxon "mæstan," to fatten. "Many nations there be even at this day, and such as enjoy peace and know not what warre meaneth, whose wealth and riches lyeth principally in mast: yea, and elsewhere in time of dearth and for want of other graine, folks use to drie their mast, grind it into meale, temper it with water, and thereof make dough for bread" (Holland, *Pliny*, b. xvi. c. 5).

sweetness, owing to the want of sun. But with the help of the grass animals fatten very readily upon mast, so that forests of beech and oak were a most valuable food reserve, especially for swine.[1] The failure of the mast meant such a loss of pigs and cattle as would lead to a famine. It is frequently spoken of as a matter of national concern.

The mast was an item of value in the sale of the land,[2] and its value was recognised by the provisions in the forest laws against its destruction. The laws of Ina of Wessex provide that if anyone cut down a tree under which thirty swine may stand, let him pay sixty shillings; in the laws of Canute, if anyone destroy an oak or other tree supporting beasts, he was to forfeit twenty solidi.[3] The Domesday Survey shows that food and not timber was the basis of valuation of forest land. The trees are valued by their pannage—that is to say, by the number of swine which the acorns or nuts would support. The entries are "wood for 200 pigs," "wood for 1000 pigs," and so on.[4] This fact goes far to explain the severity of the forest laws, and the persistence with which the kings, even in their most evil days, insisted upon their observance.

[1] It is not to be expected that many references should be found to forests in the annals of the English Benedictine monasteries, the centres of tillage and husbandry. But the Irish annals have many. *Four Masters* (835): "Great produce both of masts and acorns, which so choked up the brooks that they ceased running"; explained by an entry in the *Annals of Clonmacnoise*, "so plenty . . . where shallow brooks run under the trees one might go dry shod." *Annals of Loch Ce* (1066): "A great nut crop in all Erinn ut rebellat fluminibus"; and 1097: "A great nut crop in this year, viz. the year of the white nuts."

These entries throw an interesting light on the effects of forest growth and decay on the rivers. Instead of deep streams confined within well-defined banks, carrying down in their floods, which clean out the channel, masses of sand and refuse to form a bar at their meeting with the sea, there was a steady regular flow from the higher ground, spreading itself over a far wider and as a result a more shallow surface. The continuous decay of leaves in the river-bed hindered the downward rush of loose gravel and sand. This condition enabled ships of light draught to come far up rivers which are now closed to navigation, such as the Axe in Devon or the Rother in Kent.

[2] In *Liber Llandavensis* (17 Lan Tissi) a conveyance is taken of land, "with all its wood and acorns and hawks therein remaining."

[3] Solidi = shillings.

[4] Camden, *Britannia*, p. 398, mentions a wood at Luton which fed 2000 swine.

Besides the pigs, the forests contained herds of cattle. Fitz Stephen, writing in London in the reign of Henry II, tells us of the herds of wild cattle which roamed in the forests north of London in his day.[1] And to these herds of cattle are to be added the deer which browsed on the undergrowth and grass, and a multitude of birds and small animals of various kinds, which found a living in the streams and recesses of the forest. Wild animals of necessity entered to a very great degree into the food supplies of the age.[2]

The first value of the woods was the fruit of the trees for feed. But timber, though of secondary importance, must even then have been of great value, especially near the coast. Even in the finest forests there is comparatively little first-class straight timber of large dimensions. Such timber grows very slowly, especially in our cool climate. The unavoidable waste soon makes necessary either Government regulations, such as is practised by the United States and Germany at the present time, or the planting of new forests, or the importation of timber.[3]

Even in those days choice timber was so scarce that we find it carried great distances for special uses. Before

[1] "Very near lies a great forest, with woodland pastures, coverts of wild animals, stags, fallow deer, bears and wild bulls" (prefaced to Stow's *Survey of London*).

[2] "This is the purviance made for Kinge Richard being with the Duc of Lancaster at the Bishoppes palace of Durham at Londone the XXIII day of September, the year of the king foresaid XII (A.D. 1387).

First beginning of (franchatry) laying in provisions. 14 oxen lying in salte, 2 oxen ffreyssh, 6 score hedes of shepe fressh, 6 score carcas of shepe fressh, 12 bores, 14 calvys, 140 pigges, 300 marrowbones, of larde and grece ynogh, 3 ton of salt veneson, 3 dittoes yffresh veneson, (The pultry) 50 swans, 210 (CCX. ? 200 half scores—2000) geese, 50 capons of hie grece, 8 dusen other capons, 60 dozen hennes, 200 copull Conyngges, 4 Fessantes, 5 Herons and Bitterns, 6 Kiddes, 5 doz. pulleyn (pullets) for gely, 12 dozen to roste, 100 dozen pigeons, 12 dozen partrych, 8 dozen rabbettes, 10 dozen curlewes, 12 dozen Brewes (? whimbrels), 12 cranes, wilde fowle enogh, six score galons melke. 12 galons creme, 40 gallons of cruddes (curds), 3 bushels of Appelles, 11 thousand egges."

In the accounts of the coronation of David II there are mentioned purchases of swine, wild boars, cranes, wild and domestic geese, rabbits, capons, fowls, salmon, sturgeon, herring from Crail and Dundee, hard fish, and oysters. Forfar and Perth supply wheat, oatmeal, malt, and barley; Inverkeithing yellow peas, onions, and grampuses. The bishop of St. Andrews sends 6000 eels as a present.

[3] It has been estimated that the British Islands import £40,000,000 worth of timber yearly.

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Clontarf, Mailmora has carried on men's shoulders across Ireland from Leinster to the Munster coast pine trees for masts as a present to Brian Boru. The abbot of the monastery of Abingdon near Oxford (1100–1135) is forced to send to Wales for his timbers for a church, though the abbey had woods at Spene and Cumnor. He sends six wagons with six yoke of oxen each six or seven journeys each, into Wales for his great timbers,[1] and they have to go up to Shrewsbury to cross the Severn. Speaking of a great frost in 817, the *Annals of Ulster* say that timber for great buildings was sent out of the country of Connaught into the country of Crywhan (the lands of the Ui Cremthainn on the border of the barony of Slane, Co. Meath), by Loch Erne, "upon ice, as if it had been firme dry land."[2]

Hanmer (*Chron. of Ireland*, Edition 1633) says of Oxmonton near Dublin that at the end of the eleventh century this "faire greene or commune, now called Ostmontowne Greene was all wood. . . . From thence, Anno 1098, King William Rufus by licence of Murchard" (Murketagh O'Brien, then king of Ireland) "had that frame which made up the roofe of Westminster Hall, where no English spider webbeth or breedeth to this day."[3]

With the rarest exceptions all buildings were of wood, all implements were almost entirely of wood; it was the only material for firing, for fencing, for all mining operations, for any heating necessary for any infant manufactures. Shipbuilding depended entirely on a supply of good timber in situations convenient to the sea,[4] a sufficient reason by itself if none other existed for William's afforesting of the New Forest district.

The woods are most minutely described in Domesday, not only for pasture and for building timber but for fencing,

[1] Trabes et tigna.

[2] The extreme cold, lakes and rivers frozen over, are frequently mentioned in the *Annals*.

[3] He may be speaking from the tradition that no spider would build in Irish oak. The Hall was rebuilt with Irish oak, temp. Rich. II. in 1397.

[4] Pepys (1662) speaks of timber cut in Waltham Forest and shipped at Barking for use at Woolwich; after the great fire it is proposed (1666) to fetch timber from Scotland for the navy and for rebuilding the city.

and for use as brushwood or firewood. "Silva ad clausuram," "nemus ad sepes reficiendas" are frequent entries. This assumes split-rail fencing which requires a great quantity of first-class timber, and is the most wasteful item of forest use. To keep out deer a fence at least six feet high would be required, and to keep out hogs, especially "the wild hog out of the woods," which to enormous strength adds a very thin frame and a very keen intellect, clean timber which will lie close, and is free from ugly knots which would give a wide space between the rails, is absolutely necessary. This makes great waste, as young trees of a foot diameter clean and smooth have to be split up for rails, and except for the best part used, the tree is fit for nothing but firewood. There is no use of forest timber so wasteful, and liable to so much abuse. The lower rails of such a fence are generally of very large size and lie on thin stones just sufficient to keep them from the contact with moist earth.

Next to food, then, timber was the most important item of personal property in the islands. There must be a close time for wild animals if they were not to be exterminated,[1] and the trees on which every industry depended must be carefully guarded. So it is not surprising that the kings enforced a severe code of penalties in the forests, and punished by death and mutilation, which apart from fines were practically the only punishments in those days, or by heavy money fines those who killed the deer or injured the trees.

Round the purlieus of a forest, whether in Britain or elsewhere, a class of men collect, who lead the easy life of hunters, living in shacks built of poles or of split or hewn timber, burning the forest trees for fuel, and warring on every kind of life in air, earth, or water, tame or wild, around them. No ideals of sport restrain such men from recklessly destroying the game which is their own means of support; immense damage can be done by a very few of them to the timber in a very short time.

Cutting down and wasting young trees just about to

[1] In the German forests the does are absolutely protected, the bucks alone being killed.

become good timber, stripping the bark from timber trees, burning in various ways, especially with a shifting wind, cutting several trees to release one that is hung, cutting down trees to get at some animal or bird that has taken refuge in them—these are a few of the many ways in which a forest may soon become a wilderness of decaying wood. Men of the class who squat for hunting in the forest are only restrained from such practices by the severest penalties.

Ina's laws (543) lay a fine of sixty shillings on a man burning a log or tree in the wood, "because fire is a thief"; if he fell several trees he must pay for three trees with thirty shillings each; no more because the axe "is an informer, not a thief." By Canute's laws no one must lay hands either on wood or brushwood without leave of the chief forester. A freeman killing a stag loses his scutum libertatis; the freedman (illiberalis) loses his liberty: the slave loses his life. By the leges Henrici Primi, a collection of the usages in force before the Conquest, a fine of twenty mancuses[1] was laid on anyone cutting wood in the king's forests.

Canute had enforced more severe laws for forest offences, appointing verderers by day and night to attend to the animals and timber. The Norman kings did not bring over the forest laws from France, but they tightened still further the grasp of the Crown on the forests, inflicting the death penalty for forest offences as for ordinary crimes. The courts were held regularly to inquire into encroachments on forest lands, fire, hunting, the carrying of weapons, and the lawing of dogs, and many other matters.

Besides the men the law took care to regulate their dogs. By Canute's laws no ordinary person (mediocris) might keep dogs in the forest (quos Angli greihounds appelant), but nobles might keep dogs which had been "lawed,"[2] so maimed that they could not run the deer. "Velteres vero quos langeram appellant," apparently small lap dogs or

[1] A mark; a piece valued at thirty pence, such pence being equal to three of our pence. Twenty mancuses equal 50 solidi.

[2] Cut at the knees (?) "dum genuiscissio eorum facta fuerit." But the usual method of lawing was to cut off three claws.

turnspits, and "ramhundt," dogs attendant on the shepherd, were allowed in the forest without maiming.

Besides the worrying of the deer by the dogs, there was the dread of rabies. If this fearful scourge once spread among the wild animals of the forest, it would be likely to become ineradicable. Hardly any other national danger could be so serious. So the laws make provision si canes rabidi fuerint. If a mad dog bite a wild beast a forfeit is exacted according to the price of a freeman, *i.e.* 2200 solidi. If the wild beast is royal the affair is maximi criminis.

The Welsh laws divide sporting dogs into three classes: trackers, *i.e.* bloodhounds, fox or vermin hounds and harriers; greyhounds and mastiffs; and shepherd and house-dogs. But our chief authorities for dog law are English.

The great acreage of these forest lands, especially as they were unfenced, made their management and control, both as a source of food for tame animals and for the wild animals that sought their shelter, as well as for timber and firewood, one of the most important matters of the king's government.

But there were other causes for the exclusive control exercised by the king up to Tudor times over such a large body of the national lands. The forests were in the nature of a national reserve to be granted or leased by the king to individual owners in payment for services rendered, and as such bringing in a yearly revenue, or providing funds for a sudden emergency. Such grants, like the grants of public lands to railways in undeveloped countries now, were liable to waste and abuse in the hands of over-busy or of thoughtless kings. But as part of a system in which the king's revenue for all national administration consisted in great part of windfalls, oddments, and perquisites, they formed an item of considerable value. Besides the pasturage and value of the timber, the king had many little bits of income from the forest in the way of bark, honey, wax, and so forth.

There was another and a very stringent reason which in itself alone justified the close hold which the Norman kings held on the forest lands.

Great as was the public danger from destruction of the national supply of food and timber by irresponsible squatters and their dogs, the kings in all parts of the islands, but especially in Wessex, had to face a greater danger. Besides being a retreat for wild animals the forests were a convenient rendezvous for dangerous and discontented men, men deprived for crime of the protection of the laws, outlaws. The Romans showed their sense of this danger by avoiding forest tracts when making their roads.

Possibly the more northern and western parts of the islands could afford to ignore the danger of the use of wooded country for collecting an invading army. Possibly the shores of Ireland or of Scotland were not so wooded as to afford protection to an invading force.[1] But with Wessex it was different. The Scandinavian invasions had taught a hard lesson of small parties of well-armed pirates landing under cover of uncleared land. The level lands of Hampshire around the Isle of Wight had been only too often a naval base for a raid on the whole country south of the Thames.

When William I declared subject to the forest laws the large tract of thin, poor, low-lying soil adjoining the coast of Hampshire, called the New Forest, he may have had in his mind the convenience of good hunting-grounds within easy reach of his palace of Winchester. But he had assuredly good reason besides for his action. He needed good timber for ships, to be grown close to the Solent, which had been the favourite landing-place for the Scandinavian invader, and a convenient base for an attack from Normandy; he needed a provision of food both for Winchester and for outgoing fleets. But above all, he must for national safety have such control of this land that the discontented Saxon and his allies could not legally lurk in the recesses of the forest to hatch plots or to collect forces.

It is greatly to the credit of the Norman kings that in all their struggles with the feudal barons they did not relax

[1] Adamnan, *Life of Columba*, makes the scene of one of his miracles a "thick wood" in Skye.

their hold upon the forest laws. And it shows the common-sense of the barons that they understood the situation and that in their efforts to control the king they confined themselves to resisting the seizure of new open lands for fresh forests, and encroachment on private property.

The Southern half of England from the time of Alfred onwards was especially exposed to invasion from the coast opposite from the Scheldt to the Loire; it was exposed to attack from Wales, from the hill country of the Forest of Dean between the Wye and the Severn, from Ireland up the Bristol Channel through the wastes of Exmoor and the Quantocks, and from the country north of Watling Street through the forests of Nottingham and Derby. In almost every reign from William I to Henry II an invasion from Normandy comes up the Solent to the New Forest. The kings who were responsible for the repelling of invasions on these islands would not have done their duty if they had allowed these immense wastes to be meeting-places for the disaffected at home and for enemies abroad. That the district was royal forest did not mean that it was wooded or that it would remain uncultivated, but that the men who conducted farming operations in the scattered homesteads would do so subject to the supervision of the king's officers who patrolled the forest land, and to the laws which protected the animals and timber.

It is unlikely that the Conqueror or his sons destroyed or removed either churches or houses other than the squatters' quarters. If they did so, it was assuredly not for fear of any interference with the game but for high reasons of State to prevent this district between Winchester and the easy landing-places in the Solent from becoming the place of meeting for foreign enemies and traitors at home. It would be to the interest of the real farmers in the forest to prevent the settlement of squatters who would destroy their pasture and steal their cattle. No doubt to the editor of the Saxon Chronicle, the representative of tillage as against stock-breeding, dependent for his venison on the kindness of the king whom he abused, the chronicler who

saw the chances of a successful rising against the tyrant much diminished, the afforesting of the district was an act of shameful tyranny.

How the forest laws, through the abuse of legal procedure, did affect the owners of land is shown by a statement by Henry of Huntingdon, speaking (1136) of Stephen's pledges at his coronation. "He promised," Henry says, "that he would not lay hands on the woods either of clerks or laymen, as King Henry had done, who continually impleaded those who took venison in their own woods, or felled or diminished them to supply their own wants. This kind of pleading was carried to so execrable a length that if the king's supervisors set eye from a distance on a wood belonging to anyone whom they thought to be a moneyed man, they forthwith reported that there was waste, whether there was so or not, that the owner might have to redeem it, though the charge was groundless." Oppression of this kind is much easier by legal procedure than by force. But Stephen, like all the others, did not keep his word.

The use and misuse of the kingly powers over the royal forests was from the first most irksome to a people who had been unaccustomed under their Saxon kings to any great restraint. But in spite of this the charters of the forests, granted in succeeding reigns, took the form only of bye-laws regulating the unreasonable interference of the officials of the forest with the neighbouring landowners, and apportioning the pannage.

Each king as owner of the national wastes tried to bring more land under the forest laws and to evade the restrictions put upon them. John's charter of the forests merely checks this tendency, and makes bye-laws for holding of swain motes, for collecting taxes, for repairing fences, for collecting pannage, and for "foddering" cattle. The Charter contains provisions that freemen having land may lay out arable land, build a mill, make a warren (which would be most detrimental to the timber), make marl pits, ditches, and so forth. On the other hand, road taxes were to be collected in the forest, 2d. a cart per half year, 4d.

per baggage horse, for persons trading in wood, timber, bark, and charcoal.

But as agriculture improved and the area of cleared land increased, especially after the introduction of roots for feeding purposes, the unrestricted presence of wild animals near cultivated fields became more intolerable. And as the cultivation encroached nearer to the forest lands, the breaches of forest law by destruction of wild animals, interference with breeding,[1] cutting of timber and firewood, and by trespass of the farmer's stock on the pasture and pannage reserved for the king's or noble's stock and the animals of the chase, became a real grievance, as it occasioned a more severe administration of the forest laws. In fact, the problem took the form which it assumes on all half-developed land, whether the farmer of crops shall fence against other people's stock, or whether each shall keep his stock under fence, a problem which, as far as deer are concerned, is a very difficult one.

The forests remained for long the retreat of broken and outlawed men, of thieves and vagabonds of all kinds, who infested the roads and robbed the merchant or the monk on his journey. It became the habit for men who had rendered themselves obnoxious to society, who had too openly committed murder, who had plundered some unexpectedly energetic person, even for men who had failed in political or religious combinations, where failure was attended with serious danger, to take to the forests for a living, as men in the eighteenth century took to the road. As the vicarious powers who redressed the inequality of wealth by robbing the supposed rich for their own benefit, and occasionally giving a little to the poor, the outlaws, as embodied in the tales and ballads of Robin Hood and Adam Bell, have given to after times a sentimental and picturesque colouring to the social life of the middle ages.

The forest laws having long since ceased to serve any

[1] It is said that military movements on Salisbury Plain now are operating to decrease the sheep on the Plain in favour of tillage.

useful purpose, were repealed by the Long Parliament in the seventeenth century.

Possibly if any imagination or sense of the picturesque were left to us, the sturdy beggar who infests the casual ward in our day, would go down to the future as a gay and generous knight bent on redressing the wrongs of a world out of joint.

The calling, in spite of the ballads, cannot have been a pleasant life, as its discomforts are depicted by the man in the ballad, "the thornie wayes, the deep valleies, the snowe, the frost, the rayne, the colde, the hete," "none other roofe but a brake bush or twayne," and such meat only as a good archer could get by his bow. The very hopelessness of the outlaw's life and the continual hardships, drove him to daring attacks on all within his reach, making all travelling extremely dangerous. He sometimes went so far as to attack the towns. However interesting the life may appear to be to us, to the people of their own days the outlaws must have been an unmitigated nuisance, well worthy of the barbarous punishments which were their end when caught.

II. The Jews

The early Church banned all taking of interest whatever on loans of any kind as usury, the rate of interest not making the slightest difference. Be the debtor ever so violently necessitous, be the creditor ever so leniently generous, the assistance of a neighbour if you helped him in his dire distress in famine or in litigation with a powerful lord, was a crime against the law of God, if a penny of interest was taken for the assistance. The rate of interest, 1 per cent. or 60 per cent., made no difference.

In the first instance this was a Church doctrine, but as law began to exist, it was recognised as law by the State, the assistance of the chief or king being gained by the seizure of the goods of usurers to his benefit.

Probably no other cause has ever served in an equal

degree to hinder the advancement of mankind. As a result, the only uses to which the precious metals could be put, apart from use for ornaments, or as a pledge for the repayment of loans, was for the purchase of lucrative offices, or of land, cattle, and slaves. The doctrine thus led directly to the sale of slaves, to the sale of all offices, both lay and clerical, from the empire to the smallest judgeship, and from the papacy to the least desirable benefice. It encouraged the accumulation of vast tracts of land in a few hands, and the consequent increase of slaves to be employed in tillage.

Works of public advantage of all kinds were neglected, except when they could be done by the forced labour of the whole community, and commerce, with its attendant blessings, was hindered and thrown into the hands of the heathen Scandinavian, and Saracen.

The necessity for avoiding such an insufferable condition must have been very early felt. No doubt the law was commonly and frequently ignored in private, at the risk of the parties to whom the transaction of a loan at interest was a necessity. We frequently read of the goods of usurers being seized to the use of the king.

But a way had also to be found for society by which publicly in the ordinary business of life the taking of interest could be allowed.

The laws of the Church bound Christians only. Jews, predestined to damnation, might lend money at interest. In consequence the Jews, excluded from almost every other source of industry, became and have remained pre-eminent in affairs relating to the investment of money, acting, until the Crusades so stimulated commerce that Christians gradually ignored the Church law, as the recognised agents for finding the means necessary for all public purposes, for equipping fleets and armies, for ransoming kings, for building churches, for carrying on crusades. Whenever a large sum of money had to be raised for any purpose (as, for instance, when Geoffrey, Henry II's natural son by Rosamond Clifford, had to find the money to pay for the

archbishopric of York, or when Richard I has to provide a ransom), the Jew was the financier who made the loan.

The co-operation of the Jews in affairs of great magnitude was, as it is to-day, international, the Jews of England combining with the financiers of Spain or of Germany to make advances on the king's crown jewels or uncollected taxes, on the baron's land, on the archbishop's income from Church offices, or on the vestments and altar plate of the monasteries.[1]

Such an extraordinary connection with national finance led to the Jew having a special artificial status.

In England (and it is to England we must look now for all new records relating to national finance, Scotland closely copying English methods) the Jews, with their families and their goods, belonged bodily to the king. He might sell, mortgage, or give them away; they carried on business for his benefit and for their own, but in the larger part for his.[2]

They suffered under grievous disabilities. They were only allowed to reside, or be buried, or to have schools in certain special places, and must each wear a badge on the breast. A Christian might not serve a Jew, or stay with him, or suckle a Jewess's child. By 37 Henry III the Jews must celebrate in their synagogues in a low voice, so that the Christian should not hear them.

The king could fall back on them at any time of want by "tallaging" them—that is, ordering the whole body of them to find a fixed sum of money, and he could take the sum from any one of them, leaving him to recover the proportion from his fellows; on non-payment, their persons, with those of their wives and children, as well as their chattels, could be seized.[3] They were apparently

[1] 29 Henry II. Sancto the Jew of St. Edmundsbury, fined for taking in pledge vessels for the service of the altar; another for taking vestments. *Madox*. chap. iv.

[2] 33 Henry II. The king took a fourth of their goods; 1210, John took 66,000 marks.

[3] Henry III borrows 5000 marks from Richard earl of Cornwall, and mortgages all the Jews in England to him as security. Edward I gives Jews to his wife.

tallaged every year in different amounts, possibly a percentage on the amounts loaned, as well as in large sums on special occasions.

But this was not the only means of profit which the Jews brought to the king. Under the complicated system of financial law, the extension and abuse of which more than anything else led to the downfall of the monarchy, the Jew had to pay by way of "fine" at almost every turn for the king's assistance and protection. He paid to be allowed to be married, to get a divorce, for leave to reside in England, to have his charter confirmed, to recover his debts, to sue in the king's court, for licence to trade; or he was fined for marrying without leave, for selling his chattels without leave, for a defect in a deed, for discharge from imprisonment. And where the king was interested in the Jew's profit, he took fines of the Christian for helping him to recover his debt of the Jew.

There was a special Exchequer for the Jews, part of the great Exchequer, with special justiciars and treasurers, Christian and Jew jointly, the deeds relating to their loans being enrolled on parchment and kept in a chest.

Special rules were from time to time made about their dealings. They could take half the lands, rents, and chattels of a Christian in execution until the debt was satisfied.

Under such conditions, by the natural laws of finance, the rate of interest was very high. The usual rate of interest to the Jews appears from papers in the Treasury to have been 2d. a-week per £, and often greatly in excess of that sum. It is hardly surprising that the Jews were liable at intervals to dreadful outbreaks of violence against them in all parts of Europe.

John appears to have been generous to the Jews, giving them in the second year of his reign a charter of great privileges, allowing them to sell their chattels, and to move freely about the country.[1] But late in the reign of Henry III restrictive statutes were passed to their disadvantage, and at the end of the century the old doctrines

[1] Possibly one cause of the hatred of the monastic writers for John.

about usury began to break down, and merchants of the Italian cities of Lombardy became the financiers of Europe. In 1290 John's grandson, Edward I., who was financed by these merchants, took the opportunity of expelling the Jews from England.

CHAPTER XXII

THE DEATHS OF KINGS. 1083–1102

In 1083 William lost his wife Matilda, who had acted ably as his lieutenant when he was absent in Normandy: he fell out with his son Robert, and was unsuccessful in fighting him.

Meanwhile his justiciary or viceroy in England, his half-brother Odo bishop of Bayeux, grew so powerful that he aspired to the papacy. He collected an army which he led to Portsmouth, alleging his intention by means of it of asserting his claims at Rome. But William took no risks of armies so raised in Britain. He met and imprisoned Odo, arresting him in spite of his priestly office, not, as he said, as bishop of Bayeux, but as earl of Kent, a distinction which lets in light on the struggle now beginning between the popes and the secular rulers on "investitures."

The year 1087, two years after the great survey, was a year of exceptional pestilence and famine, very great numbers being struck down with dysentery. William, who was suffering from this disease, was riding through the town of Mantes, which, after a stubborn defence, had been taken and was being burnt and sacked by his soldiers. Stumbling on burning cinders the horse threw William forward on to the pommel of the saddle, occasioning a fatal injury. He was carried to Rouen, where he lingered for some time.

When it was clear that his end was near, his son William Rufus left for England to secure the succession. His other sons, his barons and churchmen deserted the dead lion as soon as the breath was out of his body. The attendants took the opportunity to plunder everything in the house, and fled, leaving the king's body stripped naked lying for hours unattended. At last a friendly knight took the body in a barge

down the river to Caen, where the bishops and clergy collected. But it happened that the town was on fire, and the procession had to pick its way through the flames and ashes. When the mourners reached the church which William and Matilda had built at Caen, the right to bury was challenged at the grave by a former owner of the land, who claimed that William had seized his land without payment on which to build the abbey, and demanded restitution before he would allow interment. When his claim had been satisfied and the Church's rites were in progress, the decomposed corpse burst as it was being lowered into the grave; the spectators fled, and the ceremony was hurriedly ended.

William left to his eldest son Robert, who had been at war with his father for some years, the dukedom of Normandy, and his other continental possessions; to his second son, William, he left his English territories, and to his third son, Henry, £5000 in money, or, as the chronicler has it, "innumerable riches."

William II (Rufus), who had to face at once a combination of the discontented barons momentarily freed from the strong hand, proved himself an able successor to his father. On both sides of the Channel an effort was made by the feudal tenants to reassert their independence of the Crown. In England the attempt absolutely failed. William, a stern soldier, struck like his father quickly and without pity.

But disorder continued in Normandy, after William had reduced England to his obedience. Odo of Bayeux and other Norman barons, who had raised England against William in favour of Robert, when they failed fled with their turbulent following to Normandy, and found a much easier lord in Robert, whose qualities were rather those of the chivalrous knight-errant which the age was beginning to develop than of the great administrator. Where William struck he temporised, possibly not unwilling to see the ambitions of Odo a thorn in the side of his brother, instead of disturbing himself.

The situation was a difficult one. Many of the leading barons held possessions both in England and Normandy, and were able to stir up revolt in either country from the other. Where self-interest and self-preservation were identical, it is unjust to blame William for attacking the trouble at its source by invading Normandy. This he did with effect. Robert called on his suzerain Philip of France for assistance. But William, by that hasty journey to England when his father lay dying, had succeeded to his father's treasure and he bought Philip off. This first war ended in a treaty on the basis of the status quo ante.

Robert seems to have been of that generous nature which shows a great capacity for friendship. When in later years he and William Rufus were besieging their brother Henry in the fortress of Mont S. Michel, and Henry's supplies of water ran short, Robert, like a true knight, enabled him to prolong the defence and to make better terms by supplying him with water, much as if a chess player gave back a queen to his opponent. And when in 1091 Malcolm of Scotland made one of his periodical invasions into England, Robert went with Rufus to oppose him, and he and Edgar Atheling acted as peacemakers between them.

Malcolm on this occasion again did homage to the English king, coming, as the Chronicle says, out of Scotland into Lothian in England. William as he returned refortified Carlisle, which had been destroyed by the Northmen two hundred years before.

The treaty not being kept by William (keeping engagements seems to have been his weak point), Malcolm once more invaded England, and once too often, in 1093. His force was surprised, and he with his son Edward was killed. St. Margaret, who was then on her deathbed, had strongly dissuaded him from the raid. Her biographer paints a pathetic picture of the sick queen at Edinburgh, kneeling day and night in prayer in the tiny chapel on the rock whilst she waited for news of her husband and sons, her heart racked with the fear of impending disaster. After

the news was brought to her she survived Malcolm but a few days, dying with the black cross called the "Holy Rood" pressed to her lips.

Then followed the reaction of the Celt against English influence. Margaret's sons, carrying their mother's body, barely escaped, favoured by a thick mist, down the sheer face of the rock, by a precipitous way which in ordinary times would not have been attempted.

The Southerners were driven out, and Donald, Malcolm's brother, representing Pictish ascendancy and the custom of tanistry, by which the brother succeeded in the place of the son, was placed for some six months or so upon the throne.

But racial feeling played but a very small part in war in these times; there was another cause accounting largely for Donald's temporary success. The Norse colonies in the Western Isles, like the British colonies in America, had had their origin in the emigration of the discontented. They were loyal to the mother country only if allowed a very large measure of independence, and at all times they were inclined to resent or ignore any exercise of authority from distant Norway. The king of Norway, Magnus Barfod or Barefoot (so called from his habit of wearing the kilt), the grandson of Harold Hardrada, was not the man to sit quiet and see his colonies drift away from his control. In 1093 he had come with a respectable fleet, partly small ships, a militia bound only to serve for two months, after which they returned home, and large well-appointed ships which served for an indefinite time. He came not only to settle up matters in the Orkneys and the Sudreys, but to regulate the growing authority of Godred king of Man who was taking the Isles into his hands, and to look into affairs in Ireland and Anglesea. Under his leadership the Northmen of Scotland and the Isles supported the Picts who followed Donald as against the Norman supporters of the sons of Malcolm and Margaret.

Donald's success was shortlived. Duncan, Malcolm's son, who was a hostage in the hands of William Rufus, did

fealty to him, and was supplied with a force of French and English, with which he went to Scotland and drove out Donald. But the reaction against the Southron had not yet spent itself; in 1094 the Scots slew Duncan and took Donald back. Three years later, Edgar Atheling, who acted as maid-of-all-work to the Norman kings, went with a force supplied by William to Scotland and drove out Donald for Edgar, another son of Malcolm.

After settling, as he imagined, Donald's affairs, Magnus passed to Ireland and Man.

The history of Ireland from Clontarf until the invasion in the reign of Henry II presents few features calling for record. One king succeeds another in internal war; murder and arson are the only happenings. Since Brian's usurpation, the unquestioned supremacy of Ulster was lost. Sometimes Munster, sometimes Ulster, sometimes Connaught provides the ardri "with opposition" whose influence on the tribal quarrels wavered with his personal character.

The pitiable condition of the country invited conquest from anyone who was strong enough to enforce order.

When Magnus came, Murketagh O'Brien of Munster, Brian Boru's grandson, was warring with Donald O'Lochlan of Ulster for the supremacy, both kings laying waste the country and cattle-driving over the whole of Ireland. Donald had called in to his assistance Godred the king of Man, who came with ninety ships to Dublin; Murketagh offset this by an alliance with Magnus, who coming to Ireland turned Godred out of Dublin and followed him to Man.

This Godred Crovan, the son of Harold the Black of Islay in the Hebrides, had fought for Harold Hardrada at Stamford Bridge, and had fled after the battle to Man and sheltered there. A few years later (1075) he brought a fleet from the isles for conquest; twice defeated he came again, persevered, and won the island, inaugurating a dynasty which reigned for close on 200 years. From Man he made his power felt in the Isles and on the coasts of Ireland and Wales, subduing Dublin and part of Leinster,

and controlling the naval activity of these waters until he was pulled up by the king of Norway.

Magnus swept him out of the Isles, putting in his own viceroys both north and south, and making Godred acknowledge him for Man. In 1095 Godred died. As his viceroys were murdered or molested, Magnus repeated his expedition in 1098, seizing Man and making it his headquarters, and from thence regulating his affairs. For the moment Godred Crovan's dynasty had lost Man.

Finding Edgar fairly well established in Scotland, Magnus was far too sensible to be entangled in a barren war. He avoided complications about the mainland, which was of no great value to a distant naval power, by entering into a treaty of division with Edgar, by which Edgar confirmed to him all the islands that lie on the coast of Scotland between which and the mainland he could sail with his rudder shipped.

Magnus had his ship dragged over the neck or tarbert of the long peninsula of Cantyre, he holding the tiller the while, so that the Mull of Cantyre as an island remained nominally in Norwegian hands until the year 1263.

From Man, of which he made his son Sigurd (afterwards Sigurd the Crusader), then eight years of age, the ruler, arranging a marriage between him and Biedmynja the daughter of Murketagh O'Brien, Magnus thoroughly subdued the Isles, carrying off the earls of Orkney to Norway. He built forts in Man, and sent for timber to Galloway for the purpose. Then he went himself with some ships to Anglesea.

The condition of Wales for many years had been one of unceasing civil war, the chiefs joining with anyone, Norman, Saxon, or Scandinavian, friend or foe, who would help them to raid and plunder their then immediate enemy. The country was still being raided at intervals by the Northmen, St. Davids being so attacked in 1077, the year in which Rhys ap Tudor, a descendant of Roderic the Great, began his reign as the last actual prince of South Wales, the part which longest held its independence.

The disorders and forays, as they affected the English border counties, had been met, except for one invasion (in 1081) in the time of the first William, by the erection of border castles, and by the grant of wide powers to the palatine earls of the borders. These wars became more serious at the accession of his son, as the earls of Shrewsbury and Hereford, rebelling on Robert's behalf against William Rufus, did not hesitate to call in the assistance of the Welsh and to ravage the English counties, until they were checked at Worcester by Wulfstan, the bishop of the diocese.

In the course of their civil wars the Welsh leaders in 1093 had called in in their turn Robert Fitz Hamon and other Norman knights of the border for assistance against Rhys ap Tudor, their king. With this assistance he was defeated and killed. "From that day," says Florence, "kings ceased to reign in Wales."

Of course the Normans so called in occupied the land and built castles, opening the way for actual conquest which was only delayed owing to the rough and often worthless nature of the land. A war of plunder and encroachment by the border lords upon the Welsh gradually ate into the country, the castle settling each strategic point as a base for future advance, and a storehouse for cattle and plunder.

The Welsh now in their turn attacked the border fortresses with vigour, burning and destroying along the line of the Severn. As the irruption spread, and it became clear that the border earls did not meet it, William invaded Wales to put it down. But the Welsh, retiring before him to their mountains, he in his turn retired without success, except that his counter-invasion checked the inroads into England. Two years later, he attempted another invasion, but met with no better success, after which he reverted to the old system of building castles along the marches, and encouraging the border earls and their followers to encroach on the lands of the Welsh.

This policy was more successful. But in the course

of their encroachments, the Normans came in conflict once more with their kinfolk the Scandinavian Vikings. As Magnus Barfod was cruising with his fleet round Anglesea in search of timber for his castles in Man, he fell in with two earls who were engaged in an expedition against the Welsh, Hugh earl of Chester, and Hugh earl of Shrewsbury, the brother of the Robert de Belesme who gave Henry I of England so much trouble. In the scrimmage that followed, Hugh earl of Shrewsbury was killed, as he rode on his war horse into the water, like Harold at Hastings, by an arrow shot from the ship by Magnus himself, which pierced the narrow eyehole of the helmet, an incident which illustrates the accuracy with which the men of the bow in all time could hit between the joints of the harness.

It was a very extraordinary piece of fortune, as, except for these narrow slits for the eyes, the earl was clad in armour from head to foot. Magnus did not wait to meet Norman reinforcements; he sailed away and left the Welsh to defend themselves. But he retained a nominal supremacy over Anglesea.

After this Magnus was occupied with war in Sweden until 1102, when he made his third and last expedition to Britain.

Robert de Belesme, who had become the earl of Shrewsbury, and Arnulf his brother who ruled over Dyfed and Pembroke in Wales, made alliance with the Welsh princes and with Murketagh in Ireland against Henry I of England.

Magnus appears to have taken Henry's side. He landed in Man, and again built forts, went to Anglesea and had friendly negotiations with the Prince Griffith, and finally made a treaty with Murketagh, who gave up to him Dublin. The Belesme Welsh alliance broke down, Robert de Belesme was defeated, and Murketagh was glad to make peace with the power of Norway. This, however, was the end of this last expedition of Magnus. Whether Murketagh acted treacherously, or whether Magnus was reckless or was induced by stratagem to go too far up the country with

a few followers is uncertain. But he was surrounded by the Irish as he went inland with a few followers for a raid in Ulster, and was killed with all his men, falling, as many a great fighter after notable victories falls, in an obscure skirmish against contemptible foes.

On Magnus's death his fleet sailed back to Norway, taking young Sigurd with them, abandoning both their new possessions and Biedmynja as of no further value. Godred Crovan's sons resumed possession of Man and the Sudreys, his descendants continuing to act the part of Maccus to the rulers of the adjoining mainlands, policing the western seas. In John's reign, Reginald, the then king of Man, was so employed by him, he like John handing over Man to Pandulf to receive it back as a fief, and from a letter of Henry III in 1235 we learn that Olaf, then king of Man, was similarly employed by him, being paid for his services 40 marks, 100 crannocks of corn, and 5 casks of wine, besides lands in Ireland.

Otherwise the affairs of Man are of no further interest during this period. The daughter of another Olaf who was king of Man from 1112–1153 married Somerled the lord of Argyll, and the upshot of all the fluctuations of power in the isles was that Somerled and Godred II. the son of this Olaf agreed to share the islands between them, Godred holding Man and the Hebrides.

It is curious and unprofitable to speculate on what might have been the result if Magnus had lived, and, building up his naval empire in the west of Britain, had met the Norman rulers of the south in a contest for supremacy.

In 1100 Rufus's end had come. He was hunting in the New Forest, which was the favourite hunting-place of the early Norman kings from Winchester. The king was killed by an arrow, no one knows how, or whether by accident or intention.[1] His body was put in a woodman's cart, and carried slowly to Winchester.

[1] On the morning of William's death, "a certain foreign monk," Malmesbury tells us, told one of the principal nobles of a "strange and fearful dream" which he had dreamt about the king. This being repeated

As William had been a bachelor not at all respectful to the Church, as he enforced the forest laws in all their strictness, and as he held in his hands at the time of his death the revenues of the archbishopric of Canterbury and of several bishoprics which had been vacant for several years, it is hardly surprising that the Saxon Chronicle records that during his reign "the devil frequently appeared in the woods in a horrible form to many Normans, and spoke much concerning the king, Ralph Flambard (the torch), his chancellor and head of the exchequer, and many others."

His brother Henry who was hunting in the forest at the time, rode with speed to Winchester, seized the treasure, called together such barons of the court as were at hand, and in spite of the agreement with Robert, was declared king.

to William, he, laughing, said: "He is a monk, and dreams for money like a monk: give him a hundred shillings." But he delayed his hunting until evening in consequence. Either the story was invented after the event, or, what is more probable in view of William's speech and action, he had knowledge of a conspiracy against his life, of which the foreign monk wished to apprise him. The story of his death at the hands of Walter Tyrrell is not accepted by the best historians of the time. He was probably murdered.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE ROMAN REVIVAL

As each of the northern nations received Christianity, it took from Rome its doctrines, its ritual, and its system of administration. Variations of course there were such as must always exist with a living faith. The chief differences lay either in ritual observance, or in the manner of appointing to the priestly offices.

There would appear at first to have been no regular rules as to the appointment and consecration of bishops. They were appointed by the chief or king, as was the nominee of Offa in 785, or they were appointed by the pope, as were Theodore and his assistant Hadrian when Wighard sent by Oswy and Egbert died of fever in the Roman marshes. And they were consecrated by local bishops or by some prominent bishop like Martin of Tours, or by the pope.

But as the tribes became consolidated into kingdoms under the influence of the papacy, and as the once dangerous and valueless office of bishop or abbot qualifying for martyrdom represented and controlled wealth and acquired honour, the appointment of such offices became of sufficient value both to pope and king, to make each jealous of the other's sole appointment.

The practice gradually arose of the king and his council nominating the ecclesiastical authority, sending him afterwards to Rome to receive the stamp of the papal approval on payment of fees, by some symbolic form such as the delivery of the pallium or hood of lambskin.

The powers of the pope or king waxed or waned as the papacy or nation was headed by a man of determined

character, sufficiently free from wars with his neighbours to assert his claims.

So long as the king was only head of confederated tribes, like Alfred or Athelstan, no difficulty arose unless, as in the case of Stigand, the pallium was asked for and granted by a pope who was finally unsuccessful. In the rest of the islands, apart from occasional matters of doctrine, the authority of the pope came into play very little. The Welsh bishops issued their own excommunications on occasions without waiting for Rome, both Welsh and Irish bishops holding their communications with Rome to a great extent through the medium of Canterbury.

But when Europe passed from these confederations of tribes, resting for defence upon a temporary militia, into the feudal system, a system in which the holding of land, then practically the only property, land on which every man had his place, carried with it the obligation to take the field for war, the relations of the papacy to the temporal head took on a very different complexion.

The spiritual head of the Western Church had himself by the forged donations of Constantine assumed the unsafe and unpriestly character of feudal superior over Italian lands; under the influence of this change on the papacy itself the appointment to priestly offices became no longer the selection of the best man to mould and direct the spiritual life, and amid difficulty and danger to uphold high ideals, but exercise of a right of patronage over offices involving the possession and management of vast tracts of land, numbers of cattle and human beings, rights of toll over towns and bridges and roads and hills, and accumulated wealth of the precious metals and jewels and every kind of material of value. The bishop or abbot became a feudal baron.

It is small wonder that popes and kings keenly contended for the patronage that involved so much power and wealth, or that in the course of the struggle they gave offices to men not as spiritual pastors but as political adherents, or that they accepted bribes for gifts of so

great value, or that the sale of Church offices both by popes and kings became a regular traffic in Western Europe.

In a day when lending money on interest was forbidden, so that even in the restricted trade of the times, coin passed only as a convenient token of purchase, a valuable office, whether it were an appointment as a bishop or as justiciary, was almost the only investment apart from land open to the man of means.

Bad as this was, it brought a worse use of the office with it. The incentive to investment is always keenest where natural affection for offspring dictates it. The bishoprics and abbacies tended to become hereditary in children frequently illegitimate, perpetuating the very evils out of which the keenest intellects were trying to struggle.

The efforts that were made by the high-minded Churchmen to alleviate these evils were unceasing. One wave after another of monastic self-sacrifice swept over Europe, monasteries in France, Italy, and Spain in turn giving birth to new monastic orders, undertaking vows of great severity to set an example of good life both to king and pope.

The end of the eleventh century saw a great outbreak of monastic devotion. The Cistercian order, animated by St. Bernard, attained great heights of power, and the Carthusians instituted by Bruno at Chartreuse set an example of appalling severity. By the rules of this order, introduced into Witham in Somerset a little later, no meat was allowed; the monks fasted one day each week on bread, salt, and water; they could not go outside the monastery without permission; the little that they ate they ate alone. They slept alone; if they fell ill no delicacies were permitted to alleviate their weakness. The whole system was directed to subdue the body and keep it under by all self-abnegation known to man.

Such an order only attracted the very highest rank of thinkers, and only exposed more remorselessly the irregular lives of both popes and kings. Naturally, too,

such orders tended to exalt religious authority at the expense of the lay power of the State, and to align themselves with the pope rather than with the national king. As they multiplied, claiming incessantly fresh privileges and fresh exemptions from the law, it became of greater importance to the Crown that the high officials of the Church should be chosen from among those who could be trusted to support the king's authority. This was the more necessary, as the greater proportion were foreigners.

So the first conflict in Europe between the papacy and the nations took place on the subject of investitures—that is to say, on the power of the king to invest the bishop or abbot with the property (the temporalities) of their offices as feudal tenants by the performance of the usual ceremonies which accompany the oath of fealty.

Hitherto the viciousness of the popes themselves had made any claim on their part as a matter of spiritual discipline impossible. In the tenth century the papacy reached a depth of degradation almost surpassing belief. At last, after several attempts at reform by the German emperors, after Otho the Great had crossed the Alps to establish the Holy Roman Empire and to depose a young pope of sixteen, after the Romans and the Roman popes had poisoned Gerbert (Silvester II, one of the really great scholars of all time) and other reforming German popes, after the papacy had been sold outright by Benedict IX, who became pope at twelve years old, to Gregory VI—when the cup was full, Leo IX appointed by the German emperor Henry III began a reform of the Church with the assistance of a monk Hildebrand, who had been chaplain to Gregory VI, and who afterwards became pope as Gregory VII.

The reform continued under Hildebrand, who directed the policy of the popes who were appointed. Though not immediately successful, an austere monk he made the Western Church a Church of austere monks. I do not say that he succeeded in rooting out the evils which had grown up around monastic life under a rotten papacy; that was more than one man, however sincere, could accomplish.

But now it was the papacy which set, if only for a moment, the example of a moral life to the Christian Church, instead of leaving it to individual monks to shame the head of the Church by their purer lives.

In 1061, Alexander II, the pope who gave the banner to William the Conqueror, was elected by the cardinals. But the emperor, a young boy, Henry IV, came to Rome and set up an antipope, Honorius II. A confused war of popes and bishops, monks and emperors, and banditti barons ensued. In the end Honorius was driven away. Then in 1073 the monk Hildebrand became pope in name as well as in reality, as Gregory VII, and began at once the war which was to continue for many years between the celibate monk and the married clergy, between the papacy and the monks on one side, and the king's barons, bishops, and married clergy on the other. The points at issue were the right of the national rulers to appoint to spiritual offices, the celibacy of the clergy, the right of monks and clergy to be exempt from trial before lay tribunals for crime, and the right of the pope to depose and excommunicate the emperor or king.[1] Each of these in turn became the subject of bitter conflict between the popes and the kings both of England and Scotland.

[1] As an example of the matters over which the popes claimed jurisdiction, in 1119 Pope Calixtus holds a Council at Rheims. Louis VI of France prefers a claim against Henry I of England of seizing Normandy and holding Robert in prison.

Hildegarde, countess of Poitiers, appeals against her repudiation by her husband William of Poitiers, who was then living with a third wife, the other two being alive. (This hoary old adulterer (seventh count of Poitiers and ninth duke of Aquitaine) is said to have carried on his shield the portrait of another man's wife, and to have founded an abbey of Thelema for ladies who were not nuns.)

Ouen bishop of Evreux charged Amalric with driving him from his see and burning his palace. Amalric's chaplain replied by calling the bishop a liar. The French side with Amalric, the Normans with Ouen. The pope temporises.

The bishop of Macon, supported by many other bishops, charged the abbot of Cluny with having forcibly deprived him of his churches and services due to him. The abbot replies that he is subject only to the pope. The pope decides in his own favour that he must have some footing in the dioceses.

The Council ended with the excommunication of the emperor Henry IV, and a number of others, and decrees against buying and selling offices and other abuses.

Immediately on Gregory's accession war began with Henry IV of Germany over investitures. Though this wonderful drama is outside British history, the struggles of the English kings with the papacy cannot well be justly judged without some knowledge of previous events in Germany. Confronted by papal anathema, and in consequence deserted by his feudal followers, Henry submitted, as kings always did in those days, without loss of dignity, as Henry II and John of England and Philip Augustus of France did afterwards when the weapons of the papacy were too strong for them. Crossing the Alps almost alone in the dead of winter, Henry appeared at Canossa, a fortress in which Gregory was staying, to beg for absolution. It was only granted him after he had stood fasting in his shirt for three days in the deep snow in the courtyard.

Henry's submission destroyed for ever the claim of the empire to be the lay overlord of Europe. With the submission of the empire was involved the submission of all crowned heads. Although Henry afterwards crowned his antipope in Rome, and drove Gregory to die in exile, his submission at Canossa made the humiliation of Henry II and John possible. When the king and his barons were divided, the papacy with its army of monks played the demagogue, supporting the revolting baron against the king, and exciting discontent among the common crowd; when the king and his barons were of one mind the papal thunders only produced the Constitutions of Clarendon, the Statutes of Mortmain, Præmunire, and Provisors.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE STRUGGLE OVER INVESTITURES

William I, although he made good use of the Church to forward his pretensions to the English crown, never acknowledged its authority to appoint his bishops or abbots for him. Assisted by Lanfranc, his archbishop and chancellor, whose influence was great at the papal court, he was strong enough to maintain his position.

Lanfranc died in 1089. William Rufus did not appoint to the office, but held the revenues of the see of Canterbury in his own hands. He wanted money for government, lay government being of greater importance in his eyes than any spiritual duties which might be performed by the head of the Church in England.

At first sight such a course might seem to justify all the arrogance of Hildebrand's pretensions. But it is only fair to mark that in those days the archbishop or abbot was of more importance to society as an officer of the Crown than as an officer of the Church. The bishops sitting in the House of Lords now represent the times when the great ecclesiastics formed the majority of the great council, and when all the business of the Crown, apart from fighting, was transacted by them. Not only that, but as the greatest and most wealthy of the king's feudal tenants, the occupants of the great bishoprics sometimes headed the armies, fortified the castles, and acted as border viceroys. We are so accustomed to see bishops racing about in motor cars trying to cover their diocese for consecrations of churches, ordinations of clergy, confirmations, preaching, and officiating, that we are apt to forget that these were a small part of the bishop's duties in mediæval times, to be omitted or

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deputed to others if inconsistent with their greater duties as State officers.

We meet with many mediæval bishops leading armies and falling in battle, the bishops of Worcester fighting the Welsh, the bishop of Durham and the archbishop of York holding the border against the Scots, and the bishops of Salisbury and Winchester, such as Roger of Salisbury, 1107–1139, and Peter de la Roche, 1204–1238, taking part in civil war and in the Crusades. If the archbishop of Canterbury headed no armies, it was because he was employed in matters of government more important.

The superior clergy kept great state, and were followed by immense retinues of soldiers, so much so that the Lateran Council had to limit the number of horses and men which they might impose on their entertainers in the monasteries.

Apart from all this, William, warned by the fate of Henry IV of Germany, had no special inducement to appoint an archbishop who might be a papal supporter. Certainly the result justified his action from a worldly point of view.

Then, again, in all disputes such as these, although the parties used the strongest of terms, and swore that nothing could effect a compromise, they were open, especially the papal side, like politicians now, to compromise from the first, and to the influences which lead to compromise. When in 1093 William fell very ill, and in fear of a deathbed appointed Anselm, the abbot of Bec, archbishop, and the question of investitures came at once to the front in a form which seemed to be impossible to arrange, William, knowing the papacy, might very well believe that he could settle affairs by a concordat with the pope on such a basis as to leave matters very much as they had been.

Unfortunately, in Anselm he had selected one of those uncomfortable men who will not admit compromise of principle. Anselm was one of the greatest scholars of the age, the Father of Scholastic Theology, then the highest

learning of the time, and he was a man of most saintly character, in close touch with the greatest thinkers. Like all such men, to his questions of principle he brought all the petty points of argument by which devoted, holy, narrow minds defend a chosen position.

The actual matter of the feudal investiture was settled almost by force by the monks who desired his appointment. But there were then two rival popes, Urban and Clement; Anselm wished to go for his pallium to Urban, who had been acknowledged by France. William, who had acknowledged neither, refused to allow a subject to choose a pope resident in France without his leave. But to outwit Anselm, who had received no support in his contention from either bishops or lay peers, the king sent an embassy to Rome to bribe Urban, and to obtain from him the pallium for the king, so as to avoid any investiture of the archbishop with this by the pope himself. In return he acknowledged Urban. As Anselm could not be prevailed upon to take the pallium from the king's hands, it was placed upon the altar at Canterbury, from which the archbishop took it.

Other quarrels followed. Anselm, being refused leave to hold a synod of the clergy to consider matters of Church discipline, such as celibacy, asked several times for leave to go to Rome, a request steadily refused. At length, in 1097, he went without leave, Canterbury, for the remaining three years of William's reign, being without a head, and the king taking its revenues for the uses of the nation.

When William was dead and Henry usurped the throne he recalled Anselm to his assistance. But the old questions came up, and Anselm once more went into exile. A few years later they met, and made a compromise, the king agreeing not to invest with ring and pastoral staff and the archbishop not to refuse consecration to one who had done homage.

Over and again in the history of these affairs (a history, remember, written entirely by monks, whose abuse of the kings has been copied by later historians), we meet with this struggle between king, pope, and archbishop.

In each case, putting to one side the violent prejudices of the chroniclers, there was much right on both sides.

The papal position was, in theory, impregnable.

The pope, as Christ's vicar on earth in direct descent from the apostles, represented a system of morality far above any supposed to attend the actions of lay powers. His appointments were, in theory, made strictly in the interests of the spiritual life of the nation.

As a matter of fact, the pope was most often a weary old man, who had been forced into his post as a compromise, and knew that he had not long to live, and that he had no real power of reform.

His office had been secured, like an American Presidency, by lavish election pledges, most of which he had no intention of fulfilling; he was surrounded by a crowd of office-seekers, who left him no peace; as feudal superior he was generally engaged in wars in Italy; he inherited a gigantic quarrel with the empire, and another with the Greek Church; he was often at the mercy of the Roman mob, and was always compelled to satisfy their idleness by largesse, spectacles, and amusements. He was liable to be involved in danger and difficulty by men who took their professions of faith seriously, and required him to make declarations about abstruse doctrines, or to persecute persons who differed from them in matters of philosophic belief.

And he was always in want of money, for his own needs, for his nephews, for claimants of all sorts, for Italian wars, and for foreign aggression. The bishoprics and benefices in all parts of the islands of Britain were so many articles of commerce, to be sold to the men who would pay for them, be they Italian, French, German, or Spanish.

The king's position was, in theory, impregnable.

He was surrounded by enemies waiting for opportunity of advantage. He was responsible for the safety of the nation. Always engaged in war in Britain or in France—war in which he must rely wholly on feudal forces—it would be suicidal for him to weaken his military power by admitting any exemption from the symbolism of fealty to himself

in the case of the most influential part of his feudal followers. The archbishop of Canterbury, with an advising and controlling power over the churches of both islands, representing a unity of dominion far greater than that of the king himself, stood in a position but little below the king in the estimation of the English people. To permit him, the chief feudal tenant, to receive from the pope the insignia of the office which carried with it the duty of national defence, was to put the safety of the nation in the hands of an Italian.

The king's supremacy over revolting barons depended in great measure on the position taken by the Church. When in 1173 Henry II was faced with an overwhelming combination of home and foreign foes, he owed part of his safety to the fact that all the bishops stood by him; when in 1215 John faced his rebellious barons he was beaten because an English archbishop joined hands with them and led them.

Then the king would appoint to the Church offices Englishmen with a sole eye to the national safety; the pope would appoint a foreigner, speaking a foreign language, living abroad, having no interest in the country, except to draw out of it his revenues. The king's appointment would keep the revenues in the country, and secure a fit person from personal knowledge to perform the duties.

But, as a matter of fact, the king, himself a Frenchman, speaking French, would generally appoint a Norman monk, living abroad, to hold an English diocese or an English abbey; he would sell the office to anyone for a price, without any regard to fitness, except, perhaps, military fitness; he would use his position as feudal superior to squeeze out of the ecclesiastic money which he would not be likely to obtain from a lay tenant. And though the pope would appoint a foreigner, as the services were in Latin, the common language of the world, spoken as a living language by all educated men, his want of knowledge of Anglo-Norman dialect would not hurt if he did not live entirely abroad. He would not live entirely abroad if there were any pickings to be got in Britain.

The archbishop or other official lay between the upper and the nether millstone. His best chance to avoid a crushing was to lie still. When, as with Anselm or Becket, he raised his head and took an independent course, he received blows from the king and little support from the pope.

It would seem that a fair compromise between two irreconcilable political positions could only be obtained when all three parties left principles and agreed upon a method of living. Otherwise the temper of the king or the obstinacy of the archbishop brought about conditions which neither benefited monarchy nor morals.

The pope was rarely to blame. He was generally in no position to refuse a fair compromise. The trouble was that he could not always get a sufficient consideration. Even a pope must live.

The historical deduction is, I think, that successful solution depended then (as does it not always in political matters?) on personal character on either side. When the parties had not sufficient commonsense to meet each other's views, either pope or king for the moment achieved a barren victory which brought about a strong reaction. This will be more clearly seen in the later struggle in Scotland, Wales, and England in the twelfth century.

CHAPTER XXV

THE REFORM OF THE CHURCH

The struggle over investitures was only the attractive foam which always forms when the winds are highest and the waters most disturbed. Beneath the foam ran a steady current, carrying all the great minds of Europe in the direction of greater honesty and purity in religious life, impressing in the Church, and through the Church among the peoples who were being banded into nations, the reality of the moral outlook in life as an offset to the increased cohesion of physical force. It was the Church's answer to the outbreaks North and South of pagan energy, and it was through the converted Pagan, at least in the North, that the answer most distinctly came.

The movement produced great thinkers and saintly characters in all parts of the islands before it ran its natural course of becoming a mere degraded instrument in a struggle for political power. All that was best in men and women was enlisted for the work—Lanfranc and St. Anselm in England, St. Margaret and St. David in Scotland, Gilbert of Limerick and St. Malachi o Morgair in Ireland, all moving in the same direction and actuated by the same desires. But they did not need to use the same methods.

The very efforts which resulted in the success of the Irish against the Northmen had destroyed the moral influence of the Church on social life, and with that influence the national pride which alone can protect against degeneracy. The religious monasteries, so far as they were anything, had become fortresses. The monks, having no national cohesion, no strength from the unity which the Roman system would have given them against the physical

powers of the ever-warring chiefs, became themselves either the chaplains of the fighting men of the tribe or fighting men themselves.[1]

They had obtained exemption from military service from the king of Ireland in 799, which must have weakened the national defence just at the time when it was most needed. It is not surprising in view of this that when the monks were driven out of their monasteries by the Northmen, the owners of near-by lands at the first opportunity seized on the monasteries, farmed the lands and took its revenues, and had one of the clan ordained to act as abbot and serve the offices of the monastery. The See of Armagh was so seized by a clan which held it for 200 years, one of their members during that time being ordained and consecrated as bishop and acting as the unacknowledged primate of Ireland, the son succeeding the father or the nephew the uncle in the office through the generations.

Though from time to time these men are mentioned in the Irish Annals in language showing that they were deserving of reverence and respect, it is plain that a clan episcopate of married men, associated in men's minds with the lay claims and wars of the tribe, supported by wandering bishops without settled dioceses in a country yet subject to tribal rule, could have no abiding authority over their people. Such a condition appears from the Annals. The Irish Church had lost all political influence, all power to prevent or discountenance crime.[2]

[1] Under 1055 Tighernach reports a battle between the comarb of Patrick (bishop or abbot of Armagh), and the comarb of SS. Finian and Columba (abbot of Clonard).

[2] *Annals of Loch Ce.* Under 1031: "A hosting by the son of Eochaidh into Ui Echach (Iveagh; Co. Down), when they burned Cill-Combair (Comber; Co. Down), with its oratory, and killed forty clerics, and carried off thirty captives." No comment. 1100: A hosting by Murketagh O'Brien and the people of the south into Connaught. They "burned and profaned many churches, including Fathan-mor-Mura (Fahan; Co. Donegal), and Ard-Sratha" (Ardstraw; Co. Tyrone). No comment. 1113: "The stone church of Ard Brecain (Ardbraccan; Co. Meath), with its full of people was burnt by the men of Mumha (Munster), and many churches besides in Feara-Bregh" (Brigia Plain; Co. Meath). No comment. 1128: "The comarb of Patrick (*i.e.* bishop of Armagh: this was Celsus who appointed St. Malachi) was openly profaned in his own presence" by Tighernan O'Ruarc and the septs of Leitrim and Cavan,

Its poverty was in striking contrast to the wealth of the English monasteries. The comarb of Patrick had to go his rounds like the lay chief of the tribe, eating up and collecting his revenue.[1]

And he was more lucky than most of the other bishops of the island. It may suit politicians to imagine that the poverty of the clergy increases their efficiency; it certainly increases their dependence on the wealthy layman. Besides this, prior to the Synod of Rathbreasnil in 1120, there were no diocesan divisions for bishops, the bishops throughout Ireland going to and fro at their own will or at the orders or suggestion of Armagh.

Possibly the reform of the Irish Church would have been delayed much longer but that the Norman Conquest of England brought Roman influence again into Britain—influence exercised by two very remarkable archbishops of Canterbury, Lanfranc and Anselm. Still Rome was apparently as far as ever from drawing the Irish Church into St. Peter's net by direct means. But the necessary reforms were brought about by the rivalry between the Irish of Armagh and the Norse of Dublin.

Dublin, the great trading city of the Northmen, was

"and his retinue was plundered and a number of them slain." The "evil consequence" mentioned was that "there was not in Erinn any enduring protection for a man thenceforth."

The same year the men of Tyrone and others invade Down and Meath and burn "Ath-Truim (Trim), with its churches: and a great number of persons suffered martyrdom in them." 1132: "The abbots' house of Cill-dara (Kildare) was captured by the Ui-Ceirmselaigh (men of Wexford), against the comarb of Brighid, and burned, and a great part of the church was burned, and a great many were slain there; and the nun herself was carried off a prisoner, and put into a man's bed." No comment. These examples cover all the divisions of Ireland.

[1] *Annals of Loch Ce* (1106), records that the comarb of Patrick went on a visitation of Tyrone for the first time, and "obtained his full demand, viz.: a cow for every six persons, or an in-calf heifer for every three, or half an ounce (*i.e.* of silver) for every four, in addition to many offerings besides." The same date records his first visitation in Munster "and his full tribute of seven cows and seven sheep and half an ounce for every" cantred, a territory about the size of two baronies.

Recording (under 1020) one of the very frequent burnings of Armagh, the only articles mentioned are the bells, the roof of lead, the abbots' chariot and the old preaching-chair. At the 3rd Lateran Council, presided over by Pope Alexander III, an Irish bishop is spoken of whose income consisted of the milk of three cows.

with Limerick and Waterford outside Irish influence, always restive under the jurisdiction of Armagh. In 1040 Sitric, the king of Dublin, who had been on pilgrimage to Rome, and had as a convert fallen under the spell of Rome, established a See in Dublin for the Cathedral of Christ Church, which had been built close to his fortress of Dublin Castle. He appointed a bishop, one Doonan or Dunan, for the See; but he had no intention of allowing any interference with his bishop from Armagh—his Dublin bishop was intended to be in close connection with Rome. On Dunan's death in 1074 the citizens of Dublin elected a bishop. They applied to Lanfranc to consecrate him, which the archbishop willingly did. From this time the bishops of Dublin were consecrated at Rome for Canterbury. The towns of Limerick and Waterford soon became in close touch with Canterbury, though Waterford waited until 1096 before applying to Anselm for a consecration.

Where all the great minds of a century are working in one direction, it is hard to say from whence the impetus comes which produces the final result. But whoever receives the credit of the reform of the Irish Church, Gilbert bishop of Limerick is entitled to a prominent place. He was a very strong supporter of the Roman system; he had spent much time on the Continent; he had associated with Anselm and other great thinkers. The weakness of the Irish anarchy contrasted evilly with the successive grades of orders, each resting on the other and all dependent on the papacy, which was the strength of Rome. In 1120 as papal legate Gilbert held a synod of the bishops and clergy of the Irish Church at Rathbreasail, when he divided all Ireland into 24 dioceses, which were all except Dublin to be subject to Armagh. At this synod Celsus, the archbishop of Armagh, one of the clan who had held it for so long, presided.

Celsus was in a difficult position. As a member of the family who held Armagh, reform was not to his interest; as a monk who had been brought up with a generation who felt the need of reform, he was unable to withstand the current which tended to religious unity under Rome. On

his death in 1129 he nominated Malachi o Morgair, bishop of Connor or Antrim, who was connected with Armagh, and had been educated at the school of the cathedral, as his successor. Malachi, a man like Aidan, devoted to poverty, energetic, tactful and humble, only accepted the nomination when he had been formally elected at a synod held by Gilbert in 1134. Then he assumed the office, and, after a struggle which lasted some years with the nominee of the Armagh family, succeeded in breaking the tradition and bringing Ireland in line with Rome. He had only accepted office on the condition that when he had succeeded in his reforms he should be allowed to resign. In 1137 he did so, and in 1140 he set out for Rome, taking Clairvaux, St. Bernard's monastery of the Cistercians, on his way, where he left some of his followers to be instructed in the rules of the order. At Rome he was made papal legate for Ireland in the place of Gilbert, who wished to resign, and obtained acknowledgment from Rome of Archiepiscopal rank for Armagh and Cashel. In 1148 he made another journey towards Rome, dying on the way at Clairvaux. As the result of Malachi's journeys the Cistercian Order from Clairvaux was introduced into Ireland, and Cardinal Paparo as supreme legate held in Ireland in 1152 the Synod of Kells, giving Armagh the primacy and making Armagh, Cashel, Tuam and Dublin archbishoprics, and dividing Ireland into four provinces.

The chief work of Gilbert and Malachi in Ireland then was to free the Irish Church from the dominion of the tribe, to put an end to the irregularities and want of power which resulted from the system of wandering bishops, to introduce such correlated order as would enable the leaders of religion to speak with a united and independent authority to sinners. What further reforms of faults which were not common to the known Christian world they were called upon to deal with it is impossible to say. Lanfranc, writing to Godred king of Man (as the glorious king of Ireland), after Godred had obtained possession of Dublin, speaks of irregularities in marriage, as taking wives within prohibited degrees, or

relations of deceased wives, and even of exchanging wives: in a letter to Turlogh O'Brien, then Ardri at the same time, he instances besides this, *inter alia*, the sale of Holy Orders. But neither of these things were peculiar to Ireland or Man. The main reform of Malachi and his assessors was that they made possible reforms in social matters by raising and steadying the position of those who could speak with authority on such matters. That Malachi was a man of exceptionally holy life, without worldly ambition, gave him the power to attain these ends.

The struggle between Dublin and Armagh for precedence went on through the centuries, but eventually the supremacy of Armagh was acknowledged.

In the period which elapsed from the days of Columba to those of St. Margaret, we have no record of the Church in North Britain. But Margaret in Scotland and her sons had to deal with practically the same questions as those which confronted Gilbert and Malachi in Ireland. In common with the rest of Europe the Church here gradually underwent the change which resulted in wandering missionary bishops who owned no head and belonged to no organization, civil or ecclesiastical, except the tribe, being replaced by bishops who presided over organized dioceses, who were connected with Church and State by a twofold allegiance, to their metropolitan and beyond him to the pope in spiritual matters, and to the king in secular affairs.

The difference between the two countries which underwent the change lay in the quarter from which it came. In Ireland St. Malachi, a poor priest vowed to poverty, the friend of St. Bernard, an Irishman brought up in the Irish Church, used the Roman system, direct or through Canterbury, to revive the authority of his Church against the lay tribesmen, in whose hands the election of bishops and the management of Church revenues had lain. In Scotland St. Margaret, from the point of view of the honourable secular ruler, urged the change as a means of progress in peace and order, and for the better protection of the weak against the strong lay baron. Amongst other results of the change she

obtained the observance of Sunday. So when we have again any notices of Church matters in Scotland, it is to find Margaret and her sons Alexander and David binding the clergy to the lay ruler by lavish gifts of lands, founding abbeys, creating dioceses and appointing bishops to them; following, in fact, in the footsteps of the kings of England in submission to the Church organization of Rome on the basis of a concordat. Side by side with the diocesan system of bishops came the replacement of the old Scoto-Irish monastic system, which in Ireland to a great extent held its own until Henry's invasion, by abbeys regulated by the Benedictine discipline.

Margaret, amongst other foundations, had built a monastery in Dunfermline and had restored Iona, and after her death her sons carried on the work of consolidation and order. Glasgow was founded by David while Prince of Cumbria, and Carlisle became the diocese for the part of Strathclyde south of the border. During David's reign the bishoprics of Dunkeld, Moray, Aberdeen, Ross, Caithness, Brechin, Dunblane and Galloway, and the monasteries of Holyrood, Melrose, Jedburgh, Kelso, Dryburgh, Newbattle and Kinross were founded or re-organized according to the Roman model.

The members of the older Irish organization, who acquired the name of Culdees,[1] were generally squeezed out and ceased to exist. Very probably, like the married priests of Wessex in the times of Edgar, and the Roman monks of the thirteenth century onwards, they had become too closely attached to intellectual ideals, and to schemes for the improvement of material conditions to have an ennobling influence on their times. But like these others, their story has been written by victorious enemies. It is sufficient to say that, like all things that cease to fill a useful place in the world, they ceased to exist. The manner of their disappearance would seem to be that they tended by marriage to become secular, and that therefore the lands and other property in their possession fell into secular hands and were

[1] Probably from the Celtic Céle Dé = *servus Dei*.

lost to the Church.[1] The feudal system of land-holding introduced from the south, and adopted by the bodies of Normans and Saxons who drifted into the lowlands after the Norman Conquest, assisted this secularization.

The new development was accompanied by a gradual creation of a parish system, as the new settlers set apart tithe of the lands given to them for religious purposes.

The amended episcopal system brought about a new difficulty, which threatened to assume large proportions. Who was to be the metropolitan of Scotland?—just the same dispute as had arisen between Armagh and Dublin. St. Andrews and Dunkeld both from early times stood above the other diocesan centres, but the dispute did not lie between them. It was the matter of consecration of a bishop for St. Andrews in the time of Alexander I which showed that the union with Rome had its thorny side.

Alexander wished to appoint Turgot, who had been St. Margaret's chaplain and biographer, who was prior of St. Cuthbert's monastery at Durham. To make certain that the consecration should be orthodox Catholic, it was proposed to the archbishop of York that he should consecrate Turgot. Canterbury promptly interfered and forbade it. He claimed the supreme supremacy over all Britain. As King Henry of England looked coldly on his claim, and St. Andrews was too far off for his thunder to be fully heard, Turgot was consecrated by York, with a reservation of any question of metropolitan authority. But Turgot shortly died (1115), and Alexander rashly asked the archbishop of Canterbury to send him Eadmer, the Church historian and biographer of Anselm. The archbishop tried to make the appointment result in the subordination of St. Andrews to Canterbury—a claim which he might expect to have realized, as the Scots were the more afraid of the metropolitan claims of nearer York. But Eadner, in his desire to exalt Canterbury, exalted its pretensions to such an extent that he muddled the affair and went back to Canterbury, and another, a canon of Scone, was consecrated some years after

[1] In 943 Constantine III became abbot of Culdees of St. Andrews.

by York, reserving any question of metropolitan right. The question rested ready to come up, when after the treaty of Falaise the English Church claimed the submission of Scotland.

In England the reform of the Church took altogether a different aspect. The conflict here was always more severe; the authority to which the Church was opposed was more powerful, the opposition more united; the interests involved were of greater value, the issues more closely touching the social life of all humanity through the clergy. The chief subjects of reform were the usual ones of all religious bodies for all time, the marriage of the clergy, and the sale and barter of Church offices and of the rites of the Church. These latter matters were closely connected with the right of the king to feudal investment, that is, to sell the Church dignities which fell to him. It was not his acts alone which mattered. His example was followed by every baron and by every freeman who owned a living or a right of presentation, by every one who had an interest in any kind of Church property which might be sold or exchanged. Our sympathies in this matter would be entirely on the side of the Church if the popes had not set, and did not in later years continue to set, the example of the sale for money of all that was most sacred in spiritual life. Reformers, impartial and without desire for worldly advancement, were needed to deal firmly with a condition which in some shape always exists for a Church, ready to be exploited by the politician and the fanatic for the advantage of his party.

Such reformers were forthcoming in the persons of Lanfranc and Anselm, the archbishops of Canterbury in the reigns of the three first Norman kings, two men of absolutely opposed temperaments working upon the same issues. Which ought we to place highest—Lanfranc, cautious, bold, tactful, diplomatic, far-seeing, honest, wholly a man of action, the great administrator, always able to see the other man's view, using every opening for compromise of quarrel which did not utterly lose sight of principle, suffering and ordering individual injustice where it tended

to human advantage, combining in a most wonderful degree the worldly wisdom, and the power of inducing order of the lay ruler with the highest moral insistency of the ecclesiastic; or Anselm, gentle, sympathetic, child-like, immovable from an impossible position because it coincides with a high principle, the great teacher, the keenest intellect, the most profound dialectician of Europe, unable to conceive of compromise of any ideal of Church order, unable to escape a vulgar quarrel with a coarse-minded king, because he conceived that he must not leave for any purpose the narrow path which had been pointed out to him to walk in; and withal setting an example to his contemporaries and to our generation of steadfast faith, of absolute purity, of loyalty to conviction without regard to consequences, of courage undaunted by isolation and neglect?

Able as William I undoubtedly was, his success in his dealings with Church matters were in great part due to the fact that he was coupled to a man whose mind was cast in a similar mould—a workman who could refine the metal which William mined; William II, not a whit less able, owed much of his difficulties to the fact that, as Anselm himself said, they had yoked together to the plough the untameable bull with the old and feeble sheep—two minds which by no possibility of circumstance could be brought to think or act together.

Apart from his quarrel with the kings upon investitures, Anselm steadily proceeded with the reforms then thought necessary for the clergy. The main question, which was the subject of his legislation when in 1108 he was at last enabled to hold a synod to reform abuses, was the marriage of the clergy. It was not, as in Ireland and Scotland, the initiation of a first reform. The principle of the celibacy of the clergy had been accepted as a rule from Rome in England. But between the rule and its observance there was a wide gulf, and it was Anselm's intention to bridge it.

It is hard to associate our minds with the view held of the married priests by the Church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The problem is with us now and always,

and opinion is now and always divided over it—a division of opinion which is a recognition that woman is the centre of society, the pivot of social life. Some men believe it to be impossible for the priest to devote himself to the highest interests of religious life if he is distracted by the cares of a family, troubled in mind for the advancement of his children, tempted to niggardliness, to avarice, to want of charity by want of money for his family. His authority is impugned, the value of his ministrations reduced by the inefficiency or want of adaptation of his wife as his coadjutor in parish work. Like Eli, the example of his children may paralyse his efforts for usefulness. Other men conceive that it is impossible that a man should successfully preach repentance to the human race from a partial knowledge of the temptations of one-half only; that a man brought up in the absorbing ignorance of womankind, which results from our separated system of instruction (or, as it is called, education), could have but an academic knowledge of the morals of the society which he is called upon to reform. Woman's place to him may be the home, but it must not be the home of the man whose business it is to set the standard of morals for the home. Both views no doubt have good reason to support them.

But it would be unfair to Lanfranc and to Anselm to judge their labours for Church reform by any such general considerations of all time.

The result most apparent of the marriage of the priesthood, which might give ground for compelling celibacy, that the means necessary for the subsistence of the clergy might, as in Ireland and Scotland, pass into the lay hands of the tribe or family and be put to impure and improper uses, does not appear in England as a cause, though as a cause it was almost certainly present. We know from Giraldus Cambrensis that 100 years later he had in Wales to fight the retention of churches by the family of a past incumbent, and there is no reason to suppose that England would be in any different position in Anselm's time except in degree. But in England there were other reasons for the reform.

The compulsory celibacy of the clergy has since the tenth century been the mark of the Roman as distinguished from other Catholic communities. It is one of the chief sources of her strength. The married man cannot be easily detached from the nation in which his family surrounded by their kinfolk have their set place, in which they find their livelihood. The single priest could be sent as a missionary preacher or as the pope's diplomatic emissary to any part of the world at a moment's notice, unburdened by the ties of family or race; he owed allegiance to no one but to the head of his monastery, and through him to the papacy.

The struggle, which lasted into the sixteenth century, was just coming to a head between the papacy and the kings of the nations for political power. But for the support of the monasteries such a contest would have been impossible. They were the pope's fortresses in the enemy's country, playing the same part between the national king and the pope as the king's fortresses played between him and his barons. It is the control of these fortresses which causes the struggle about investitures; it is their possession freed from the authority of the bishop which gives the papacy its power of interference. To Lanfranc and to Anselm the celibate monk was a friend of the Church, the married priest an enemy, a king's man. The new canons required the clergy to separate absolutely from their wives; if it be necessary afterwards to speak to them, they are only to do so out of doors in the presence of two witnesses. They may not celebrate Mass even after this except after suspension of forty days and penance done.

Whatever views we may take of celibacy as such, there can be no question that the change meant progress then, even if the Church confined the intellect of the times within bounds which were harmful. It delivered Europe from the fear of a theocracy under a caste of married priests, while it provided a set off against the absolutism of the monarchy. The growing force of national life needed moral checks which could not be supplied if the clergy were at the king's disposal. So long as the Church in the islands was governed

by men like Lanfranc and Anselm there was no danger that the assumption of power by Rome, which resulted from the celibacy of the clergy, would be in any way harmful to the nation. The first necessity for any advance of the religious life was such organization of the Church itself as would ensure decent living among the preachers of the Gospel, separating them as far as possible from the men whose business was slaughter. The work had been already done for southern England by Dunstan and his fellows. But it had to be done again, and extended to the other parts of the islands by Lanfranc and Anselm. For England these two Lombards were the agents of Rome for the reform: Scotland and Ireland, as before, received it through workers who were British-born. Men can only do the best for their own time; they cannot foresee the trouble in the future which may result from the employment of good means.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE CRUSADES

In 1096 the opportunity of obtaining Normandy without war came to William. Pope Urban at Clermont preached the first Crusade. The adventurous Robert duke of Normandy in common with Baldwin count of Flanders, Godfrey of Boulogne, Raymond of Toulouse, Stephen of Blois (afterwards king of England), and other peers of France, wished to join the Crusade if he could find the necessary means for the expedition. William, the stay-at-home man of business, quickly found a loan of 10,000 marks of silver or £6666, and received in return a mortgage of the dukedom of Normandy. Robert, thus financed, started for the Holy Land, making the agreement with Rufus that in case of death the survivor should possess the dominions of both. But the bargain was a fatal one to him. After Rufus's death Robert had to reckon with his brother Henry, to whom he had given water at Mont S. Michel.

The Holy Land had been in the hands of the Mohammedan Saracens since the year 668. They were tolerant rulers, and gave the Christian pilgrims to holy places little cause to complain. But in 1073 the Saracens gave place to the Turks, tribes from Tartary, who had adopted the Mohammedan religion. As frequently happens with perverts, they lacked the tolerance of the Saracen. Pilgrimages to Palestine had very greatly increased in number; men of repute brought home pitiful stories of the cruelty and ill-usage which pilgrims endured.

The struggle about investitures intervened to prevent action, until at the end of the eleventh century one Peter, called the Hermit, brought from the patriarch of Jerusalem

letters relating cruelties inflicted on the Christians, and praying for assistance. He went through France preaching a Crusade, and enlarging on his relations of the conditions of the East.

Leaving a German antipope in Rome, Pope Urban II went to France, where he held a council at Clermont in Auvergne. Here he delivered an eloquent address urging a Crusade, which met with fervent acceptance. The whole audience, carried away by enthusiasm, burst into the cry, "God wills it." Thousands were at once enlisted for the expedition, which the pope commanded should start in the next spring.

But the enthusiasm of the common men was too geat to wait for any organised expedition. A huge crowd of people, without leaders, without provisions, without definite purpose, men, women, and children, whole families on foot or in their waggons, set out to follow Peter the Hermit to the Bosphorus, the children asking as they came to any good-sized town if that were Jerusalem. Like a swarm of locusts, this multitude, guessed by the chroniclers at six million people, traversed Europe, dying by tens of thousands on the way, eating up the countries which they passed through, dreaded by the inhabitants of the towns, who sometimes refused them passage, sometimes sold them to slavery, and at others put them to the sword. Of those who set out under Peter the Hermit barely one-third, says Ordericus Vitalis, arrived at Constantinople. Here they stripped the lead from the roofs of the churches and sold it, pillaged the palaces of the rich, and plundered on all sides. The later Crusaders plundered and burnt the Greek towns, and the emperor's cavalry hung on their rear and cut off stragglers.

The cities on the way might well dread a vast multitude which contained the two extremes of religious fanatics and the criminal offscourings of Europe. For many a year to come Crusaders served to relieve Western Europe of its best and its worst; the king looked with pleasure on his neighbour king, or on the too powerful feudal noble, spending his strength and wasting his resources in distant wars;

the debtor fled from his debts, or joyed to see his creditor depart; men whose crimes had become too much for outraged society, men who had tired of the dull round of work on the land to which the feudal system tied them abandoned with the religious enthusiast the privations of ordinary life for the adventures and fortunes of an unknown world.

The effect on the position of the papacy was profound.

The Crusades lasted fitfully for about two hundred years, from 1097 to 1270. The popes soon learnt to use the crusading armies to reduce to order the papal enemies; they used them for the persecution of heretics; they forced kings or emperors who disputed their authority to take the cross and to leave their kingdoms, unprotected by their personal authority, open to the encroachments of the papal emissaries.

In the place of claims based on the forged decretals, apart from disputes with the secular powers over the form of acknowledgment for offices which involved both religious and national duties, the papacy now stood forward before Europe as the representative of the unity of Christendom in a war against the infidel, as the organiser of armies and fleets, as the umpire and conciliator of princes. Henceforth the papal claim to depose princes was backed not only by anathema but by physical force.

The effect on the states of Europe itself amounted to a revolution. The kingdoms and territories which had been a mass of jarring atoms, with no ideal save a larger territory or a greater power over the neighbour, gradually found with each successive Crusade a unity in the Christian religion of which they had not dreamed. They became, as it were, if only by the example of the infidel, in a sense one people, and at the head of that people, the bond which made the unity possible, directing its energies and regulating the relations of its members to the other, was the papacy. Little wonder that Henry II and John, and even the Edwards, found a wrestle with Rome a work of far greater difficulty and danger than it would have been for either William I or his sons.

The sense of Christian unity was deepened by emulation with the infidel, arising from the discovery that the bar-

barous East, as the West had considered it, contained a higher civilisation than their own. In the train of the returning Crusaders, after each effort, came new arts, the manufacture of wire, for instance, with the new form of stringed instruments which it made possible, types of architecture, new forms of dress, a fresh impulse to sciences of all sorts, medicine and chemistry especially, a better knowledge of gardening, new fruits, flowers, and vegetables, a new stimulus to astronomy, geography, and navigation. The Arabian horse improved the clumsy breeds of the West, the tempered steel of Damascus the imperfect weapons. Hardly a form of human exertion but received a sudden impulse forward from contact with Arabian civilisation. Commerce, directed into new and most fruitful fields, brought not only an enormous increase of national wealth, but that enlargement of general view which acquaintance with strange lands and unusual customs carry with them. New ideas of geography, that most valuable and most neglected science, began to stir in men's minds. In the wake of the Crusader and the trader came the globe-trotter with his book of impressions, his account from hearsay or imperfect observation of impossible habits of imaginary peoples, his strange jumble of birds and beasts and reptiles, plants and minerals. Some of the narratives of these travellers are interesting as antedating our supposed modern usages and discoveries. Marco Polo, the Venetian trader in the thirteenth century, tells of a fountain of petroleum oil at Baku, and Sir John Mandeville's travels contain an account of a public incubator at Cairo. "There is a common house in that city that is all full of small furnaces, and thither bring women of the town the eggs of hens, of geese, and of ducks to be put into those furnaces. And they that keep that house cover them with heat of horse-dung, without hen, goose, or duck, or any other fowl. And at the end of three weeks or of a month they come again and take their chickens and nourish them and bring them forth, so that all the country is full of them."

And while sciences, manufactures, and arts profited from

this contact with the infidel, men's minds, in the centuries of this counter-attack by the West on the advancing East, reverted to the literary treasures of the Greeks, a study which, though not immediately noticeable, bore much fruit in after years. But, in fact, the Crusades were in themselves a reawakening of Europe to the civilisation of the East. Besides, the literature, the arts, sciences and manufactures, which were brought to Western Europe through contact with the Mohammedan, were in great part only borrowed by them from the Greeks of Constantinople, for whom, as heretics, the monkish chronicler has such a contempt. Several centuries were to elapse before the West became fully alive to its inheritance of thought, but the material advantages of its commerce were early grasped.

A great movement in society was produced by the change of ownership of the land and the more free circulation of money and money's value which resulted from the great nobles going on these expeditions. It brought to the front a smaller class of men, who profited by their absence or their needs, leading to a modification of ownership which eventually broke the bonds of the feudal system.

Much of John's difficulties both with the Church and the feudal barons resulted from the embarrassments of the great nobles who had followed Richard to the Crusades, and the immensely increased prestige of the papacy which had resulted from them.

In 1118 the Crusades produced a new order, the Knights Templar, half monk, half soldier, enlisted to defend the Holy Sepulchre. The order, like other monastic orders, owed their strength in great measure to their exemption from the ordinary Episcopal authority. During an interdict, for instance, they grew fat on the fees for performing burials which were forbidden to the ordinary clergy. But they eventually became so very powerful and wealthy that after two hundred years of life, when the loss of the Holy places rendered the order useless, the lay powers fabricated charges against them, and they were plundered and destroyed.

The first Crusade, in which Robert of Normandy and

Stephen of Blois both played a very brilliant part, was successful in wresting Jerusalem from the hands of the infidel. A kingdom of Jerusalem was founded of which Godfrey de Bouillon became king. But from various causes the plant refused to take root. The chief cause was the same one which at the present day leaves Palestine in the hands of the Turk—the miserable jealousies and quarrels of the European powers.

In 1147 a new Crusade, animated by St. Bernard and led by Louis VII, the French king, and Conrad the German emperor, attempted to nurse it into life. This Crusade accomplished nothing, Jerusalem falling again into the hands of the infidel in 1187.

This was followed by the Crusade in which Richard Cœur de Lion, Philip Augustus of France, and Frederic Barbarossa of Germany took part, resulting, not in the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre, but after several years of fighting tremendous efforts and shameful quarrels and treacheries among the Crusaders, in the gain for pilgrims to the Holy Land only of certain rights and privileges.

In the fifth Crusade preached by Innocent III, Britain did not take part, being concerned in the settlement of matters of government at home. But in 1240, Richard earl of Cornwall, the brother of the English Henry III, made an abortive expedition. The two last real Crusades were undertaken in 1249 and 1270 by St. Louis of France. In the first he was taken prisoner, and in the second he died.

After that the movement had spent itself. Efforts were made from time to time to revive it, kings (such as the English Henry IV) assumed the cross, and promised assistance. But Europe had other things to think of which concerned her more nearly. The long conflict had taught the rulers other lessons, and the papacy had ceased to be the centre of unity for European endeavour as a Christian force. The popes had abused the Crusades by using them for selfish ends, until, when they cried "wolf," no one heeded them. The cessation of the Crusades coincided with the breaking up of Christian unity in the West. Can they not be revived?

CHAPTER XXVII

THE LINE OF ALFRED RETURNS

After his acceptance by the chief barons as king on William Rufus's death, as stated above (page 341), Henry went to Westminster and was consecrated king by Maurice, the bishop of London, making the usual oaths to govern justly, and promising not to farm out bishoprics and benefices, promises which were made by every king in succession, being kept or not as the king had power to evade them. Henry did not make any concessions about the forests. His charter, though it was of no importance in his reign, acquired great repute when it was brought out in 1213 before the barons by Stephen Langton, with a view of limiting the royal powers.

Henry took other measures to make his calling and election sure. He at once recalled Anselm, who had spent the last three years in exile, and with his assistance brought over the English to his side by a marriage with Matilda (also called Edith), the daughter of Malcolm and St. Margaret of Scotland.

Besides their numerous sons, Malcolm and Margaret had two daughters, this Matilda and Mary. They had been sent to the abbey of Romsey, of which their aunt Christina, St. Margaret's sister, was head, for education. There Matilda (there is nothing said about Mary) assumed the veil, not, as she said and as we may safely assume, with any intention of becoming a nun, but as a protection against the too close attentions of Norman soldiers.

When, however, Henry asked her in marriage, Christina declared that her niece had taken the veil. In view of the life led by Henry before his marriage her reluctance to see

her niece married to him was quite intelligible.[1] The matter had to be referred to Anselm, who closely investigated it, deciding finally that Matilda was no nun. She herself said that she wore the veil on compulsion of her aunt, and that the moment the aunt's back was turned, the veil was torn off and trampled on.

Her sister Mary was given in marriage to Eustace of Boulogne, the son of the Eustace, brother-in-law of Edward the Confessor, whose attack on the citizens of Dover had led to the banishment of Godwin and his sons.

Mary and Eustace had one daughter and heiress, Maud of Boulogne, who married Stephen of Blois, afterwards king of England. This Stephen was the son of Adela, who was the daughter of William the Conqueror. The line of Alfred through St. Margaret and Malcolm Canmore was thus represented once more on the English throne through both Matilda and Mary.

Undoubtedly Henry's marriage was popular with his Saxon subjects, and it had the effect of adding strength to his position as king by election in the place of his elder brother Robert. The marriage secured his northern border against Scotland, giving him an ally in the Scottish king against rebellious Norman nobles.

Matilda's tact and talent for administration helped him over many hard places in his reign. She acted as mediator between Henry and his brother, and between Henry and the pope when, as almost immediately happened, Henry fell out with Anselm about investitures, and she governed

[1] Henry is credited with thirteen illegitimate children by different women before his marriage with Matilda. One of these children is connected with a striking example of the vaunted mediæval chivalry in war. Henry in his wars in Normandy, in the matter of dispute about the castle of Ivri, made a treaty with Eustace de Breteuil, who had married Henry's natural daughter Juliana, and gave him as a hostage the son of Ralph Harenc, the governor of the fortress, in exchange for the two little daughters of Eustace, Henry's own grandchildren. Eustace put out the boy's eyes, and sent him back to his father, whereupon Henry delivered up his own granddaughters to Ralph Harenc, who put out their eyes and cut off their noses. He then besieged his daughter in her castle. She shot at him with a cross-bow but missed. She was obliged to surrender. Henry made her jump off the walls half-naked into the fosse ditch full of snow water.

the kingdom as his regent in his frequent absences on the Continent. She is credited with efforts at road-making which must have been very badly needed, and with building a substantial bridge over the River Lea near Stratford, after she had been nearly drowned there while crossing the ford. She appears to have inherited her mother's love of magnificence, with her affection for the Church and her charitable disposition towards the poor and afflicted.

As an example of queenly occupations the chronicler tells how she was found by her brother Alexander, the king of Scotland, on her knees in her apartments at Westminster, washing the feet of beggars. She suggested that Alexander should help her in her work of mercy, but the Scottish king had other engagements.

Matilda bore her husband two children, William and Matilda. Matilda, as a young child of five, was married to Henry V, emperor of Germany, a man of more than forty years of age, being held in the arms of the archbishop of Treves for the ceremony. On his death without children she returned to England.

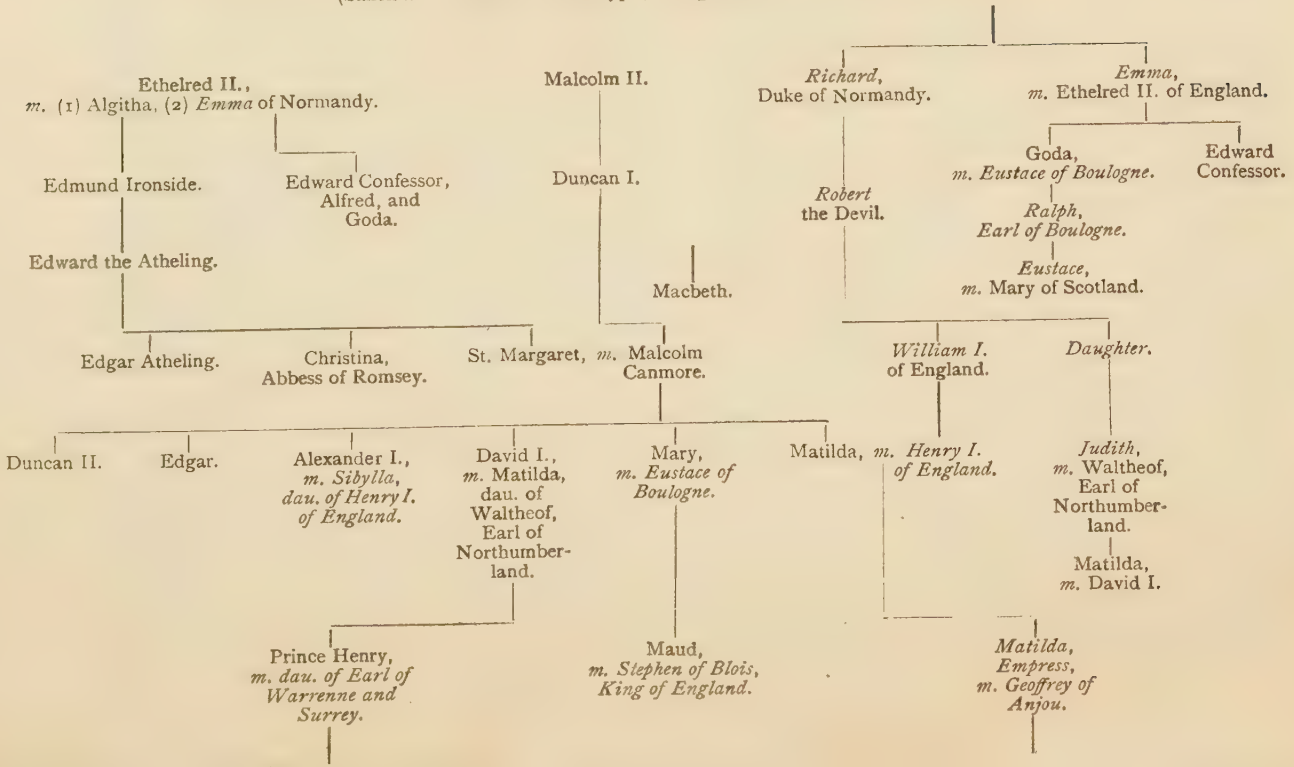
Henry could hardly have expected to hold his kingdom in peace without a fight. Robert, who had made himself a distinguished name in the East, came back leisurely from the Crusades, stopping in Sicily to marry on the way, and bringing with him money to pay off his mortgages. Hostilities began at once. Henry garrisoned the castles of Normandy against Robert, and Robert prepared to invade England.

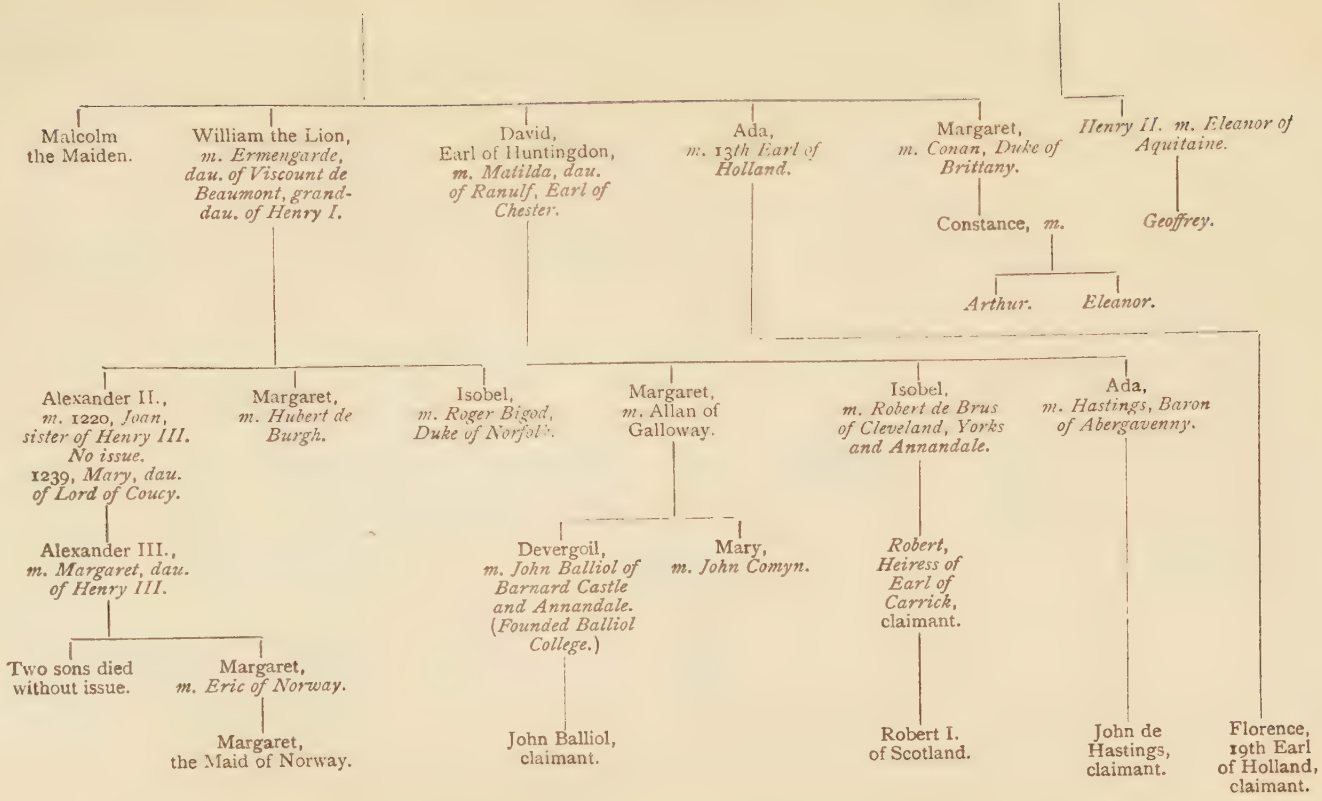
The fleet set by Henry to watch the coast and to prevent a landing deserted to Robert, who landed at Portsmouth and marched on Winchester, while Henry was waiting for him at Pevensey. Arriving at Winchester, Robert was told that Matilda was in the city in confinement of her first son, William. Whereupon Robert gave up the assault, saying that it should never be said that he began a war with an assault on a woman in childbed. He and Henry then advanced to attack each other, but when the armies met mutual friends arranged terms. Henry released his claims

THE ALLIANCES OF THE KINGS OF BRITAIN

THE SAXON-SCOTTISH LINE AND ITS NORMAN CONNECTIONS

(Saxon and Scottish in roman type; foreign connections in italics.)

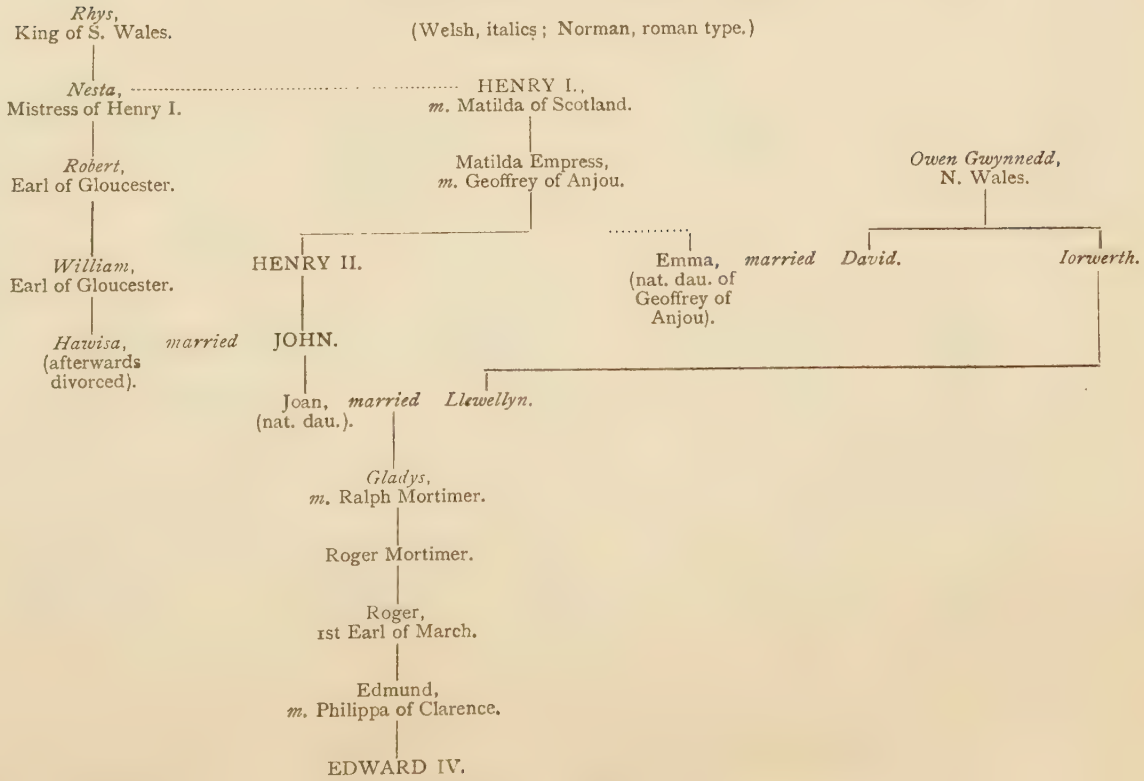

Ethelred II., m. (1) Algitha, (2) Emma of Normandy.
Edmund Ironside.
Edward the Atheling.
Edgar Atheling.
Edward Confessor, Alfred, and Goda.
Christina, Abbess of Romsey.
St. Margaret, m. Malcolm Canmore.
Malcolm II.
Duncan I.
Macbeth.
Duncan II.
Edgar.
Alexander I., m. Sibylla, dau. of Henry I. of England.
David I., m. Matilda, dau. of Waltheof, Earl of Northumberland.
Mary, m. Eustace of Boulogne.
Matilda, m. Henry I. of England.
Prince Henry, m. dau. of Earl of Warrenne and Surrey.
Maud, m. Stephen of Blois, King of England.
Richard, Duke of Normandy.
Robert the Devil.
William I. of England.
Daughter.
Judith, m. Waltheof, Earl of Northumberland.
Matilda, m. David I.
Matilda, Empress, m. Geoffrey of Anjou.
Emma, m. Ethelred II. of England.
Goda, m. Eustace of Boulogne.
Edward Confessor.
Ralph, Earl of Boulogne.
Eustace, m. Mary of Scotland.


Malcolm the Maiden.
William the Lion, m. Ermengarde, dau. of Viscount de Beaumont, grand-dau. of Henry I.
David, Earl of Huntingdon, m. Matilda, dau. of Ranulf, Earl of Chester.
Ada, m. 13th Earl of Holland.
Margaret, m. Conan, Duke of Brittany.
Henry II. m. Eleanor of Aquitaine.
Constance, m.
Geoffrey.
Arthur.
Eleanor.
Alexander II., m. 1220, Joan, sister of Henry III. No issue. 1239, Mary, dau. of Lord of Coucy.
Margaret, m. Hubert de Burgh.
Isobel, m. Roger Bigod, Duke of Norfolk.
Margaret, m. Allan of Galloway.
Isobel, m. Robert de Brus of Cleveland, Yorks and Annandale.
Ada, m. Hastings, Baron of Abergavenny.
Alexander III., m. Margaret, dau. of Henry III.
Devergoil, m. John Balliol of Barnard Castle and Annandale. (Founded Balliol College.)
Mary, m. John Comyn.
Robert, Heiress of Earl of Carrick, claimant.
Two sons died without issue.
Margaret, m. Eric of Norway.
Margaret, the Maid of Norway.
John Balliol, claimant.
Robert I. of Scotland.
John de Hastings, claimant.
Florence, 19th Earl of Holland, claimant.

THE ALLIANCES OF THE KINGS OF BRITAIN.

NORMAN-WELSH CONNECTIONS.

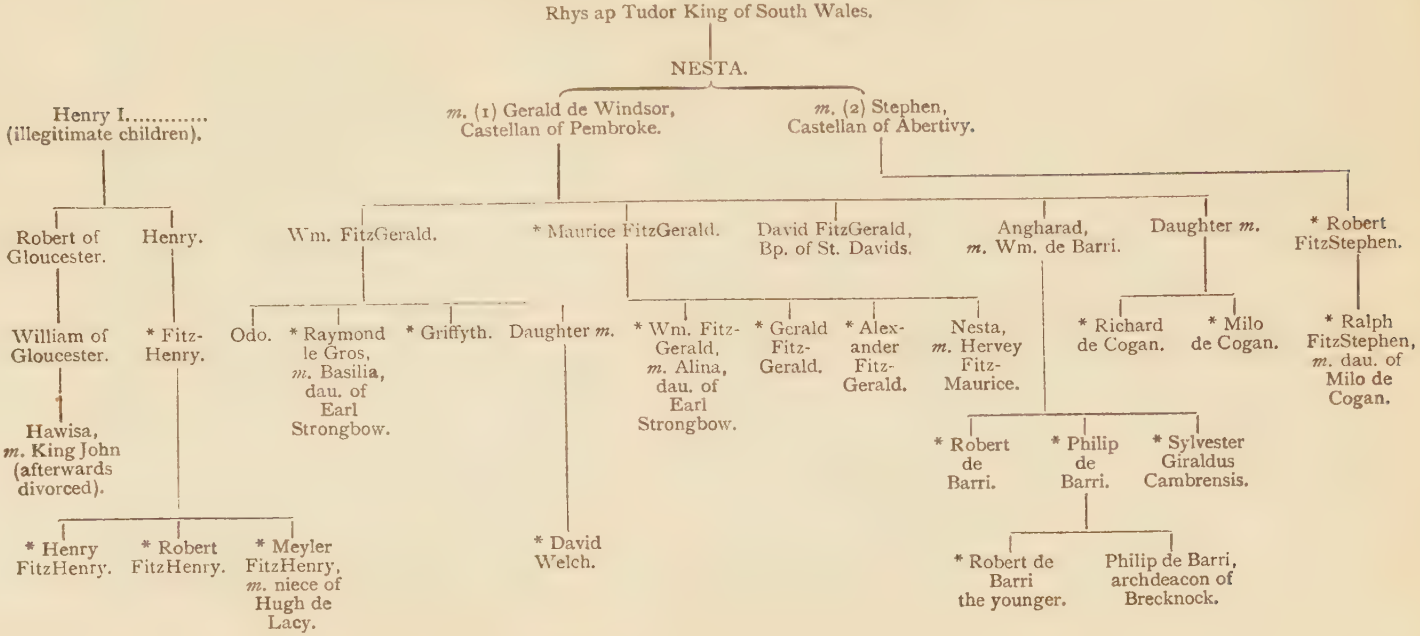
(Welsh, italics; Norman, roman type.)



THE DESCENDANTS OF NESTA.

From Wright's edition of Giraldus Cambrensis' *Conquest of Ireland* (1863). See page 388.

*All those marked with a * took part in the Irish expeditions in* 1168–70.


Rhys ap Tudor King of South Wales.
NESTA.
m. (1) Gerald de Windsor, Castellan of Pembroke.
m. (2) Stephen, Castellan of Abertivy.
Henry I..... (illegitimate children).
Robert of Gloucester.
Henry.
William of Gloucester.
* Fitz-Henry.
Hawisa, m. King John (afterwards divorced).
* Henry FitzHenry.
* Robert FitzHenry.
* Meyler FitzHenry, m. niece of Hugh de Lacy.
Wm. FitzGerald.
Odo.
* Raymond le Gros, m. Basilia, dau. of Earl Strongbow.
* Griffyth.
Daughter m.
* David Welch.
* Maurice FitzGerald.
* Wm. Fitz-Gerald, m. Alina, dau. of Earl Strongbow.
* Gerald Fitz-Gerald.
* Alex-ander Fitz-Gerald.
Nesta, m. Hervey Fitz-Maurice.
David FitzGerald, Bp. of St. Davids.
Angharad, m. Wm. de Barri.
* Robert de Barri.
* Philip de Barri.
* Robert de Barri the younger.
Philip de Barri, archdeacon of Brecknock.
* Sylvester Giraldus Cambrensis.
Daughter m.
* Richard de Cogan.
* Milo de Cogan.
* Robert FitzStephen.
* Ralph FitzStephen, m. dau. of Milo de Cogan.

on Normandy, and Robert gave up his claim to England for an annuity.

But, notwithstanding, so long as the two countries remained under rulers who each claimed a title to the territories of the other, peace was impossible. The barons who held lands in England under Henry were barons in Normandy also. Only when John lost Normandy was it possible for the barons in England to live in peace without looking across the Channel for opportunities of feud and plunder.

Robert de Belesme, earl of Shrewsbury, who was also a baron of Normandy, fell out with Henry and raised the Welsh marches in rebellion. Henry defeated him and drove him across the sea. This led to further disputes with Robert, ending in an invasion of Normandy. Henry, refusing to listen to Robert's overtures for peace, bribed the holders of castles to surrender to him, and finally, in 1106, captured Robert at a battle at Tenchebrai in Normandy, and imprisoned him in England for the rest of his life. Robert's generosity and confidence received its due worldly reward. He has since been called a "weak" ruler by the historians.

The retribution for this act followed like the chorus of a Greek tragedy. Robert had a young son William, whose part in the quarrel was taken by his suzerain Philip of France, and by Fulk earl of Anjou, to whose eldest daughter Sybil this William was contracted.

This occasioned war with France and with Anjou, whose borders, as the earl possessed Maine, marched with Normandy to the south. As a set off to this alliance, Henry married his son William to Fulk's second daughter, Alice. But when his French wars and marriage festival were concluded, when Henry and his sons were crossing to England in a calm sea, the ship in which the young princes were sailing struck on an unseen rock and went down with all hands.

This left Henry to face Robert's son with no successor of his own except his daughter Matilda. So, in 1127,

Henry obliged her, for reasons of State, much against her will, to marry Geoffrey the son of Fulk of Anjou, a match most unpopular both with Normans and English, in order to detach Fulk from William's interests.

The ill-assorted match had no sooner been made than the death of William, Robert's son, without heirs rendered it unnecessary. The way was left open to Henry's heir without opposition. Henry, who knew how very unwillingly the barons of Normandy and England would accept a woman as feudal superior, that woman partly of Saxon birth and married to an Angevin enemy, on several occasions called together his barons to swear fealty to Matilda as his successor. The barons accepted her at Henry's wish.

The Scottish king David claimed the right first to swear fealty to Matilda as earl of Huntingdon. He kept his oath. The second was Stephen of Blois, Henry's nephew, and the third Robert of Gloucester, Henry's son by Nesta daughter of Rhys ap Tudor of Wales. The final result at Henry's death in 1135 was that Stephen of Blois came to England, and was crowned and generally accepted as king.

CHAPTER XXVIII

FEUDAL KINGSHIP

THE chronicler who had been abusing the kings William and his sons William and Henry for the "tyranny" and "rapacity" with which they enforced order with the strong hand, is equally severe on Stephen for allowing the disorder of his reign. If the general condition of the country in the civil war that followed is fairly represented by contemporary writers in the description of a time when "men openly said that Christ and His saints slept," every horror that civil war and anarchy bring in their train was let loose.

We have no knowledge how far the general statement, mentioning neither place, name, nor date, was local or general. The account may have been overdrawn.

The chronicler lets us know that in the times which he describes his own monastery did not suffer, but entertained on a lavish scale.

Apart from his oath of fealty to Matilda, it is not surprising that Stephen found a large following in England. Himself a brilliant Crusader, a French noble of repute, a grandson of the Conqueror, his wife Maud on her side represented the English and Danes through her grandmother Goda, the sister of Edward the Confessor, and both the English and Scottish through her mother Mary, the daughter of Malcolm Canmore and St. Margaret.

Looking back through the centuries, it seems by results that Matilda and her Angevin husband were very tardy in opposing Stephen's usurpation. But in those days Normandy was the key with which to unlock England. Geoffrey and Matilda must secure the castles of Normandy, must

subdue Blois, and ensure neutrality on the side of Brittany and France.

Stephen had succeeded to Henry's treasure, and he was able to make such work for his opponents on the Continent that it was some years before Matilda was sufficiently secure to venture to attack him in England.

The records of Scotland, since the day when Edgar, with the assistance of William Rufus, had obtained possession of Scotia, had been comparatively peaceful.

The son of Margaret and nephew of Edgar Atheling could not be expected to have a keen enthusiasm for the Norman kings of England. But hemmed in as he was by the Northmen on the north and west, who, while often repudiating the authority of their lord the king of Norway, had no intention of submitting to any claim of the king of Scots, unable to reduce to any real subordination the Pictish or Norse marmoers (or earls), who did not admit his lordship, the king of Scots could not afford lightly to quarrel with the English king. It was only as he gradually obtained a firmer control over the mixed races of the north and west that he took a firmer tone in the south. This change did not come at all with the first two sons of Margaret, Edgar and Alexander the Fierce.

Edgar, surnamed the Peaceable, had carried on very successfully the policy of being friendly with all his neighbours, while at the same time making any little gains which could be managed without expense or trouble.

The conditions of the north in his time favoured this policy. The mainland, nominally subject to Norway, was, as we have seen (pp. 190-2), gradually passing into the hands of rulers friendly to the king of Scotland, acknowledging his supremacy, while the islands ignored the rule both of Norway and the Orkneys.

On Edgar's death the kingdom was divided between his two brothers Alexander and David, Alexander governing the eastern portion, while David reduced Strathclyde and the west to order.

This was an arrangement which worked well when the

two brothers were harmonious, admitting of heavier pressure upon the men of Galloway and the west than could under ordinary conditions be exercised by a sovereign at Dunfermline or Edinburgh, and making easy a close watch on Man and the Northmen of Ireland. Both kings allied themselves with the south, Alexander marrying Sibylla, a daughter of Henry I, and David Matilda, a daughter of Waltheof earl of Northumberland.

As earl of Huntingdon, David would appear to have spent a good deal of his spare time as an English baron at the court of his sister, a much more pleasant residence in those days for a holy and artistic king than the West of Scotland. How he became earl of Huntingdon is not clear. But it was the practice of the kings both of England and France to grant some agreeable manor to any great military tenant or neighbour who might at a distance be dangerous, and by this means induce a residence or attendance at the capital and the court. On Alexander's death in 1124 David succeeded to the whole of Scotia.

Some years after his accession, about 1130, Angus MacHeth, the marmoer of Moray and Ross, who claimed the throne of Scotland as the representative of the Croebar Moray dynasty, invaded Scotland and marched south to the southern slopes of the Grampians. Here, at Strickathrow in Forfar, not far from the northern Esk, he was met by the constable of Scotland (David had introduced the Norman titles as well as the Norman feudal organisation), who grievously defeated and killed him. His brother Malcolm, who had married into the family of Somerled of Argyll, continued the claim, raising a force among the men of the western isles, and ravaging the Scottish coasts. His own men gave him up to David (a comment on tribal loyalty), and David kept him in prison for safety. In 1156, after David's death, Malcolm's son renewed the struggle with the assistance of Somerled, but was captured and sent to join his father.

Margaret's sons had inherited her intense devotion to Rome, which covered Scotland with churches and abbeys.

David especially exceeded all in the profuse generosity with which he endowed the Church with lands and founded religious houses. One foundation was specially to be remembered, that of Holyrood. St. Margaret had died holding to her heart her most sacred relic, the black rood, a crucifix of gold and ivory enclosing a piece of the true cross. The abbey built by David for this holy rood at Edinburgh soon took on the name of Holyrood House. The road connecting the abbey with the fortress on the rock was called the Canon's Gate.

But David, that "sair sanct for the crown," as one of his descendants called him, was not a saint only.

The holiness, the simple-minded devotion to religious duties, which would seem to have distinguished the three sons of St. Margaret who succeeded Malcolm, was not out of keeping with courage and with chivalrous aggression often ill directed. So it is not surprising that before Matilda could fight her way into England, David, who had espoused her cause as against the husband of his grand-niece Maud of Boulogne, twice invaded England on her behalf.

The first expedition, soon after Stephen's accession, in which David, advancing south, was faced by Stephen with his army, partook more of the character of what we should term in modern times an armed demonstration, each seeing how far he could frighten the other. As Stephen had too much on his hands elsewhere to wish for any trial of force, a temporary agreement was reached as to the Scottish claims in England, and other questions were shelved. But in 1138 David again invaded England in force.

This was no mere raid. The huge mixed force which David led partook of the character of that combination which was defeated by Athelstan at Brunanburg in 937.

Not only the Picts of Scotia and Galloway, but the Northmen of the north and west, and almost certainly of Ireland and Man as well, were there. The Northmen had no concern in David's quarrel; their presence in his army was a protest of fear against the steady encroachment of Norman England, and an expectation of plunder.

With David was a small body of Saxons and Normans

in armour, refugees from England resident in Scotland, but the greater part of his force was an assemblage of half-armed tribal fighting men, under no discipline, who could neither be employed in any military manœuvres, nor be trusted to obey any orders but those of their local chiefs.

Stephen was too much concerned in the south of England to be able to meet this horde with his armies. Archbishop Thurstan of York, after vain efforts to check David's army by appeals to religion, collected a little band of Norman knights for defence, and sent two of them, Robert de Bruce and Bernard de Baliol, to treat with David. They were unsuccessful, and the Normans prepared for battle at Northallerton. They drew up round a wagon in which was set up a huge pole on which hung various banners of the saints, with relics, and at the top the host. Round this compact body of men in armour David's tribal levies surged and charged without effect, while the arrows of the English archers created confusion in the mob, which in the end broke up and withdrew with great loss. This was called the Battle of the Standard.

The Picts, the English of Lothian, and the Northmen of the Isles and the north partook of the comradeship which comes to all men who have faced death side by side in battle. Henceforth England could not count on the internal divisions of race which had hitherto weakened the Scottish king.

Some defeats have equal effect with victory. This one could not have been so very serious, as David did not leave England but retreated north, and besieged Wark Castle. In the next year Stephen was glad to make a treaty, giving David possession of Northumberland, to secure neutrality until he, Stephen, was ready again to attack him.

The condition of affairs in Wales was equally serious to Stephen. Henry had been more successful than his brother William in his wars with the Welsh. The process of corrosion was telling, as the border lands were held more strongly and the castles multiplied. Henry had planted

colonies of Flemings, who had been forced to emigrate by inundation of the sea, or who had followed the Conqueror to England as mercenaries, in Pembrokeshire in South Wales, to take the Welsh in the rear, and he led armies into Wales in 1114 and 1121, to receive their evidences of submission, hostages and cattle.

But immediately upon his death the Welsh burst out and overcame the whole border country, slaying and burning. The Normans at first were entirely overwhelmed; their parties were cut off in detail, their strongholds burnt, and their cattle and crops destroyed. In the surprises and combats and acts of valour, the account reads like a war in Afghanistan.

Richard Fitz Gilbert, earl of Clare, passing unarmed through the country to his castle with a few attendants, relying on the good feeling which existed between himself and the Welsh, was surprised and killed in an ambush. The Welsh then over-ran all his possessions and attacked his castle.

His widow defended it with spirit, but provisions ran short, and her position became very dangerous. Hearing of this, Milo earl of Gloucester, with a very small force, passing through the least frequented passes, fell suddenly on the besiegers, and for the time relieved the castle.

On the Welsh part Gwenlliant, the wife of Griffith, prince of Dinevur, in her husband's absence, led a foray against the Normans. But she was defeated, taken prisoner, and put to death.

Later in the year 1136, both sides collected their forces for a decisive battle, which was fought at Cardigan, resulting in the defeat of the Normans, who, it is said, left three thousand on the field. The bridge over the Teivy breaking down with the weight of men and horses, many were drowned. After this the Normans, demoralised, confined themselves to holding the castles; reinforcements sent proved insufficient, or were beaten in the field; and Stephen was too busy holding his own in England to invade Wales.

The Welsh turned their arms against the Flemings,

continued their depredations and burnings, and joined the forces in England which fought against Stephen.

But they could not refrain from civil war. Mere success against the Normans, with the respite which it gave from pressure from without was sufficient to start quarrels between the princes, who hired Irish mercenaries against each other. When they did fight against the Normans, they carried home their plunder without attempting to follow up their victories. No one of the princes could submit to the other as leader. The net result of the Welsh wars in Stephen's time was that some castles were taken that commanded country, but that the Welsh were as far as ever from achieving independence of the English king.

In 1142 Cadwallader, one of the brothers of Gwenlliant, having on hand a war with his brother Owen Gwynneth of Monmouth, hired a fleet of the Northmen of Ireland and the Isles, and apparently fell on Man, for Olaf the king of Man remembered his submission to Norway, and hastily sent his son to do fealty to the Norwegian king.

When in 1140 the Empress Matilda landed in England, there came to her assistance a great power in the person of her brother Robert, earl of Gloucester.

Henry I, after a fashion not uncommon in those days for unmarried men, a fashion encouraged by the attempts of the papacy to force celibacy on a married clergy, had, before his marriage with Matilda, lived as man and wife with (among others) Nesta, the daughter of Rhys ap Tudor, the last king of Wales. She had borne him several children, of whom Robert of Gloucester was one.

Nesta's after story is an important link in British history.[1] When Henry married, he gave Nesta in marriage to a Norman Welsh noble, Gerald de Windesor, the Norman in charge of Pembroke Castle. By Gerald, Nesta had several sons.

One Owen ap Cadogan, wishing to obtain possession of Nesta, gained admission to the castle, set it on fire, and in the confusion which followed carried her off with her

[1] See pedigree of descendants of Nesta, p. 379.

children among other plunder. The children were afterwards returned, but Nesta lived with her new lord. Later she married Stephen, the Castellan of Abertivy, by whom she also had sons.

Sons and descendants of Nesta by both her husbands, the Fitzgeralds and the Fitz Stephens, and also her sons the Fitz Henries, were among the first adventurers who in Henry II's reign invaded Ireland, including among them Giraldus Cambrensis, the historian of their invasion.

Matilda on landing went to Arundel, the castle of her stepmother, Adelicia of Louvain, who had been the second wife and widow of Henry I. Stephen at once marched on Arundel. Here was his opportunity to end the war at once by seizing his enemy, throwing her into prison, and extorting what terms he pleased. But Stephen at once showed his unfitness to be a usurper of the twelfth century. While the whole country was shaking in the balance, bishops, knights, and barons uncertain or in revolt, the Scots threatening, and the Welsh victorious along the border, Stephen, like a knight of romance, conducted the ex-empress with all honour to Bristol, and then went in pursuit of her brother the earl.

There is not space in which to recount the fortunes of the picturesque war which followed. Stephen, at a battle at Lincoln, in which the Welsh largely assisted his enemies, was taken prisoner, but did not receive at Matilda's hands the courtesy shown to her. He was ironed and confined in a fortress. Thereupon Stephen's wife, Maud of Boulogne, came into the war. She took up arms for her husband in Kent, and drove Matilda from London. The empress went to Winchester, and besieged the cardinal, Henry of Winchester, Stephen's brother, who had formerly been her adherent, in his castle.

The Church had played a great part in putting the usurper on the throne. But Stephen in an evil moment had quarrelled with, plundered, and ill-treated several of the bishops, including Roger of Salisbury, the chancellor of Henry I. Driven by this for the moment to join Matilda

against his brother, Henry of Winchester had turned again to the other side.

Matilda was assisted in this siege by David of Scotland and by many revolted barons.

But Maud came with the Londoners, and in her turn besieged the besiegers. Matilda raised the siege of Henry, and began a leisurely retreat. Attacked by Maud's troops, the retreat became a rout. David was taken prisoner and ransomed; Robert earl of Gloucester, a far more serious loss, was taken prisoner and was exchanged for Stephen. Matilda made her escape.

Afterwards besieged by Stephen at Oxford, she escaped over the snow dressed in white.

All the various chances of civil war, with its accompanying famine and cruelties, fill up the years until in 1152 Henry, Matilda's son, afterwards Henry II, landed in England. About the same time Eustace, Stephen's son and heir-apparent, died, leaving the field open to Matilda and her son.

CHAPTER XXIX

ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE

About a year and a half before Stephen's death an event took place which changed the whole fate of Britain.

The king of France had a most powerful vassal in the lord of Aquitaine, the southern part of France. This southern part was at that time the most refined, the most advanced in the arts and sciences of social life and of luxurious living of all the peoples of Western Europe. The Roman civilisation had receded more slowly and had left a more fertile sediment in this part of the empire than in any other.

The great stretch of seaboard, the long deep rivers, the "broad armed" ports, the smallness of the waist round which the arm of Italy touched the Atlantic, insured naval power and commercial predominance; the language, a combination of what was smoothest and most forcible in Latin and French, generated and encouraged a poetic literature, at a time when except for the Scandinavian literature of the sagas and the debased Greek and monastic Latin, all the languages of Europe were vulgar and half-formed dialects. To great wealth and power the rulers of the southern country added refinement of manners and the literary accomplishments of the times.

The many provinces which made up the district of Aquitaine had been united by the marriage of William, count of Poitou, to the heiress Philippa, duchess of Guienne and Gascony and Countess of Toulouse. Their son, William, count of Poitou, called the Good, died in the Holy Land, leaving two daughters, Eleanor and Petronilla.

The elder William was the opposite to his pious son, William the Good, being a gay ruler who got all the enjoy-

ment out of life which the times afforded. But when he was sixty-eight he proposed to abdicate, persuading his feudal tenants to accept as their ruler his granddaughter, Eleanor, then a lively young girl of fourteen.

At the same time a marriage was arranged between Eleanor and young Louis, son of Louis VI of France, then on his deathbed, a union by which France would be made a compact and powerful monarchy. The marriage took place in 1137, and then Eleanor's grandfather handed over his territories to his grandchild, and went staff in hand on a pilgrimage to St. James of Compostella.

The territories of Louis VII and Eleanor made possible a united France, but the disposition of its rulers were diametrically opposed. Eleanor, like Isaak Walton's handsome milkmaid, had not yet attained so much age and wisdom as to burden her mind with fears of many things that will never be, as too many men often do. A most accomplished beauty of fourteen, able to read and write, a composer of music, the arbiter as duchess in the poetic contests of the southern troubadours, accustomed to the joyous social life and the unrestrained relations between the sexes which prevailed in her own possessions, used to see her will implicitly obeyed, to enforce her views as final law on matters of art as well as government, of a temperament like her grandfather William, she was hardly likely to find pleasure in the company of Louis VII, a pious ascetic, careless of pleasure, engrossed in the dull business routine which is required from a ruler for the mastery of the details of government, attentive to religious duties, and an ardent supporter of St. Bernard in his Church reforms.

Still they might have passed through life as many a married pair do without open scandal but for circumstances which brought to a head the differences of taste and temperament. After years of marriage, in a war which Louis was waging against the count of Champagne, he took by storm the town of Vitry. In the sack that followed, the cathedral, in which over one thousand persons had taken refuge, was burnt with all who were in it.

Edessa had fallen in 1144, and a new Crusade was being urged by St. Bernard of Clairvaux. Preaching in Burgundy before Louis and Eleanor, he made such eloquent use of the terrible incident at Vitry that both of them were moved to take the cross. In June 1147 they set out for Palestine, Conrad emperor of Germany leading an expedition at the same time.

A number of the ladies of Aquitaine accompanied Eleanor to the East, wearing, we are told, men's clothes for the expedition, of whom the monastic chronicler has many spiteful things to say, laying on them the responsibility for all the defeats and disasters of the campaign. The queen's ladies need not have been an embarrassment to the Crusaders. Women in those days occasionally directed armies in war, and they were chiefly the surgeons and nurses of the army. One of the most charming stories in British history is connected with the expedition to the East of another equally great woman, Eleanor, the wife of Henry II's great-grandson, Edward.

All that interests us here is that Eleanor and her husband fell out, and that he became displeased with her freedom with her uncle, Raymond of Toulouse, prince of Antioch. When it became evident that the Crusade would end in ghastly failure, they came home in mutual displeasure, the woman nursing her discontent with her husband's conduct, and he compelling her to remain in Paris without revisiting her southern dominions.

In the meantime Eleanor made the acquaintance of young Henry, Matilda's son, who on his father's death had come to Paris to do homage to Louis for Normandy and Anjou. After this the tension between Louis and Eleanor led to an application by Eleanor to the pope for a divorce on the ground that her marriage with Louis was within the prohibited degrees, she being his fourth cousin. Louis made no opposition, and the divorce was granted by a Papal Council on March 18, 1152. Eleanor had had two daughters by Louis. She was then about thirty.

Eleanor immediately left for the south, running great

risks from importunate suitors on the way. Six weeks later at Bordeaux she married Henry, who was about nineteen. In August of the same year a son William, who afterwards died, was born to them.

The suzerainty of the French king over Aquitaine was nominal only, and Louis, who was not strong enough to keep Eleanor's territories against the will of the south, was obliged to give them up to her. She provided Henry with a fleet, with which he made such accommodation with Stephen that an agreement was entered into between them to the effect that on Stephen's death Henry should succeed, and that he should be Stephen's justiciar or viceroy in the meantime.

In the autumn of 1154 Stephen died, and in December Henry and Eleanor were crowned at Westminster.

Up to this year 1154, the balance of physical force in the islands had been too evenly divided to allow of any such aggression by the stronger on the weaker as could lead to the unity of the islands. England was, as she had hitherto always been, by far the strongest and most advanced of the divisions, but not so strong but that civil war made her keenly susceptible to invasion from the north or west. The barons of the north, rendering always a grudging allegiance to the king of England, were liable at any moment to break out into open revolt.

Normandy, open to attack from the French king or from Anjou, was a source of weakness to England rather than of strength, calling off to action in the south armies which would otherwise have been employed on her northern and western borders.

The king of Scots, repelling the attacks of the Northmen from the Orkneys, Man, or Ireland, and reducing to order the rebellious marmoers of Argyll or Galloway, was never in a position to make more than irritating raids over the border.

The tribes of the Welsh or Irish could never combine at all, except for a few fitful moments, to repel external invasion.

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The great Norse sea empire, stretching from the Shetlands to Anglesey along the coasts of Scotland and Ireland, had ceased as a united whole to be aggressive, becoming less an empire than a trading community, as if John Company had succeeded to the Imperial Government in the Indian Empire.

All this condition of equality was removed when Henry, in right of his mother Matilda duke of Normandy, in right of his father count of Anjou, Maine, and Touraine, and in right of his wife lord of Poitou, Guienne, Gascony, and Toulouse, became king of England. As a result, during Henry's reign, in spite of fierce wars with France, grievous disputes with the Church, and rebellions raised against him by his own children, the whole of the British Isles, except Man and that part of modern Scotland which was then under the control of Norway, came by comparatively peaceful means under Henry's sovereignty. During his reign it seemed as if it might permanently remain so.

The very number and variety of the French states and their mutual jealousies strengthened his position, so long as no cause arose to combine them in opposition to his rule. When this happened, as to Henry himself in 1188–9, and later to his son John, after the element of personal loyalty had been removed by the death of Eleanor, the whole empire collapsed like a card house.

The advantages which the possession of the French provinces gave to a king of England were great. The stretch of seaboard, which included the mouths of the Seine, the Loire, and the Garonne, giving England the control of both shores of the Channel, protected Britain from invasion, while it threw into British hands the trade of the most wealthy part of Western Europe.

It brought Britain into close touch with this highest civilisation of the West, and through the Mediterranean ports of Southern France with the East, now being rediscovered by the Crusades.

The trade in the Bordeaux claret, in the wines of Gascony and Poitou, was probably as old as the first settle-

ment of Britain by Roman soldiers. From the very early times a great part of the trade of the port of London had consisted of this trade in wine. But now, under the union, the trade flourished extravagantly all over Britain. Merchants made fortunes; the carrying trade built up the ports on the south coast, and called for a large increase in British shipping.

Luxurious material and arts from the East were introduced into the islands. But not wealth alone came from this alliance with a land flowing with milk and honey. The frequent dealings between England and the country which led the world in secular poetry could not but raise the literary tastes of the islands in a high degree.

The union came at a time when men were ready to accept learning. The Crusades had awakened the whole of Western Europe to a sense of humility not only in arms, but in letters. They had gone out to conquer barbarians, and they had come back learned with the sense of their own imperfections. Britain, that had little share in the first two Crusades, learnt some part of the lesson by her connection with Aquitaine.

The advantages of the connection were offset by some very serious risks. The nobles of Aquitaine had exercised a feudal independence of France. When Eleanor married Louis they stipulated for the retention of their own laws and customs, and they were hardly likely to be more submissive to a young man of twenty, the son of the earl of Anjou, even if by their lady's assistance he could win the throne of England.

The feudal confederation under a powerful chief suited great nobles. They were willing to give to him fealty based on mutual defence, and to allow him the revenues and privileges due to such allegiance. But any attempt on the part of the king to bring about a closer union than confederation, or to make any alteration to his advantage in the conditions of feudal tenancy, encountered dangerous opposition. Henry seems to have seen this quickly. He does not appear ever to have enforced any personal autho-

East

North

South

West

Europe from the Hereford Map. End of 13th century. See Introd. Chap., p. lii.

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rity over the country, or to have attempted to combine the whole into one under a personal monarchy. So far as such a wandering monarch could be said to have any settled seat of central government, it was Winchester or Westminster rather than Bordeaux.

The arrangements made while his sons Henry and Geoffrey were alive show that he looked for a division at his death, Henry taking England, Normandy, and Anjou; Richard, Aquitaine and Poitou; and Geoffrey, Brittany.

But the birth of John upset his plans and involved him in war with his sons. So long as Eleanor lived, her personal influence alone served to keep her dominions from being incorporated with France. To continue such personal influence, Richard had been early brought up as the ruler of the South under his mother. But on her death after Richard the barons of Aquitaine would appear to have held apart from John, a king unknown to them, whose disputes with his barons and with the Church prevented him from giving them any effectual assistance in wars against the Angevins and the French.[1]

As there was no national life, there could be no loyalty on their part to any person apart from hereditary association and the power of protection.

The empire thus created lasted through the reign of Henry and into those of his sons, Richard and John.

As the problems which faced them were alike, and as their reigns were concerned with all parts of the islands, this period must be treated in a future volume as one continuous history in its different aspects.

[1] We have as yet few records or histories from Aquitaine itself bearing on the political relations between the English kings and that part of their dominions.

CHAPTER XXX

THE END OF AN ERA

This volume closes just as the most interesting period of British history begins.

In every respect the accession of Henry II to the throne of England marks the end of an era in the islands.

The feudal landed system with its military advantages, though as an agency of war it was even now being superseded by mercenary armies, had become supreme in England, and through England had replaced, in Scotland south of Loch Ness, in the borders of Wales, and on the south coast of Ireland, tribal society based on land ownership by the community, modifying society as much by the idea of federal unity and the mutual obligation which it engendered, as by its actual operations on the customs of land ownership or on the obligations of military service.

Ireland after a silence of 150 years comes again into history, Wales attains some prominence in the story, and the affairs of Scotland both as regards England, Ireland, Norway, and the papacy are of surpassing interest.

The conquest of Ireland, Wales, and Scotland by Henry brought all parts of the islands except Man and the Scandinavian possessions in the North and West of Scotland under a federal rule which was a reality, a rule which prepared the final catastrophe of the Angevin kings, by making the warring tribes familiar with federal power resting on moral as well as political force, and on discipline which represented subordination to moral ideas, as it was illustrated by the conflict between Henry and his sons with the federal system of the Roman papacy.

The English common law, which is now the basis of the

law administered over well-nigh the whole empire, began now to take definite form and followed Henry's conquests; and the organisation of the king's courts, with their intimate connection with finance, developed under Henry and his sons the power of the Crown at the expense of the local noble, the system by its excesses leading to the reaction against central government which began with Magna Charta.

A new chapter opens in the history of the papacy itself. It climbed to the very heights of power in the hundred years which followed 1154. Its conquests in the islands are marked by the conflicts between Henry and Becket, between William the Lion and John Scot, between John and Stephen Langton, between Henry, Richard and John with Giraldus Cambrensis and the canons of St. David's, and by the conflict even before Henry's invasion of Ireland between the old Church of Ireland and the Roman system of the Welsh-Norman invader.

But it was not all gain. In spite of its apparent supremacy, many causes contributed to impugn the authority of the popes. The great schism, which presented to Europe the spectacle of rival successors to St. Peter, the means used from time to time to close it, the want of money resulting from the double courts, and the consequent corruption which called for increased contributions of money, the conflict about usury between the Church and the commercial classes, the reckless use of the interdict and excommunication, the quarrel with the Greek Church and with the empire, and the creation of a public opinion which resulted from the calling of the general councils, these were all influences inimical to the catholicity of the Church. This was further affected by the revival of letters and of sciences of all sorts which followed the Crusades, which disinclined men to accept without question the doctrines of the Church on scientific subjects, and by the immense development in wealth and political influence of the monks and the consequent decadence of the spiritual side of monasticism.

With Henry II we reach an entirely new class of annalists who, in their special reporting, gave a new colour to all imperial questions. They were monks who were men of affairs, no longer confining themselves to the seclusion of the monastery but following the court, partaking of its pleasures, its perils, and its profits, while they criticised often very bitterly the king and the nobles from whom they received their fees and other pickings.

In the hands of the most reliable of these historians, such as Roger de Hoveden, Ralph de Diceto dean of St. Paul's, the author of the chronicle which goes under the name of Benedict of Peterborough, and Matthew Paris of St. Alban's, we have a far more extended view of European affairs, and more liberal and just conclusions than can be found in the Saxon Chronicle which closes at Henry's accession. Besides the historical works of this school it includes a class of writers who introduce us to fanciful creations under the guise of history, such as Geoffrey archdeacon of Monmouth and Walter Mapes archdeacon of Oxford, and writers who lose no opportunity of inserting in their historical works any funny stories or amusing instances of miracle or marvel which come in their way, such as Gerald du Barri (Cambrensis) archdeacon of Brecknock. These three men were of Welsh blood. The archdeacon, the bishop's man of business travelling about much in the course of his duties had exceptional opportunities for becoming acquainted with facts, and for adorning them with improbable fancies.

Such literature as there was at this time (and there was a revival of literary effort owing to the Crusades) was an international literature written in Latin, the language which was becoming daily more fully the medium of thought and conversation for all educated men. It was a literature written by men who were closely connected through the English court with all that was courtly and refined in the thought of the French Provençal poets, men who expressed their ideas with a tentative freedom made possible by the rediscovery of the East through the Crusades. Such as it was, coming

at a time when all parts of the islands were being drawn under one federal authority, it superseded all the literature of local tongues. As the naval power of Scandinavia ceased to be aggressive, the influence of her language on the islands waned; the Celtic in which the Annals of Ireland and Wales were being written became the medium of special localities only; so that as English, the compound of the Latin, French, and Anglo-Saxon, gradually grew into general use following the victorious arms of the English kings, it became, as it is at the present day, the common tongue for the whole of the islands.

This might not have taken place if the other languages of the islands themselves had contained at that time a literature of general interest, or if the Scandinavian literature had dealt with European affairs. But as the English tongue grew it grew without a native rival, the affairs of the Church and all that it controlled of science and art being written in Latin, and the affairs of the State and of lay poetry and literature in Norman or Provençal French, the contributions of Ireland and Wales concerning themselves with affairs of little interest to men of other parts.

Military warfare was passing through the modifying stages of the levies of the tribe, the feudal arrays based on landed tenure and the employment of mercenaries. The development of military service, from service in wars as member of a tribe to service as holder of land from a feudal superior, reacted on agriculture, which in England and Lothian underwent a complete change, corresponding with the change from tribal to feudal usage. As the land community of the tribe gave place to the feudal manor, the system of common tillage very slowly gave way to individual ownership; very slowly, for this process which brought about many political revolutions was still in action, affecting the civil wars of the seventeenth century and the enclosure disputes of the eighteenth.

But the increase of tillage brought about a greater interest in agriculture, the great barons taking part as great farmers in the development, as the military changes

gave them less chance of employment in war. Sheep-breeding began to take a prominent place as an industry as the wolves were killed off and trade increased with Flanders; the relations between the wild life and crops had to be readjusted even at the cost of revolution; Britain began very slowly to revert to the position which it had held in the days of the Romans as a corn-growing country.

Another influence which affected the ideals of life both social and political in Britain in this new age was the growing vigour of town life. As a result of the Norse raids there came with their cessation, and with the "good peace" which William brought into Britain, a rush of commercial activity which refused to be content with distant fairs and coarse home manufactures. Mechanics who could invent new forms of beauty or new forms of use found welcome everywhere. Besides the fortified trading posts of the Northmen, and the settlements round the cathedrals and monasteries which the Northmen had raided, there had grown into importance as centres of trade, first under the shelter of a neighbouring castle or of a neighbouring monastery, and later as independent corporations chartered by the king or lord, clusters of merchants' houses, which quickly grew into a power which rulers could not afford to ignore. They became, as they increased in wealth and extended their operations to places outside the islands, centres not only of trade but of great political influence. In the disputes over the provision of means for carrying on the business of the country, which now become so large a part of history, they became a most important factor. Commerce is the mother of freedom from tyranny or anarchy. The necessities of the kings both of England and Scotland led to their granting for money charters containing very wide powers of self-government to towns, the thin end of a wedge which more than any other cause led to the loss later on of the powers of the kings over taxation and legislation.

But the two most remarkable of the changes of this time in Britain were the co-operative system of law and

finance organised by Henry and his sons, and the growth of naval supremacy, of which they laid the foundations.

The workings of the king's courts both on their legal and financial side underwent a revolutionary development of the most interesting kind through the operations of the king's exchequer, the finance being so closely connected with the working of the law, that the one cannot be studied to any advantage apart from the other.

This financial law superseded tribal law and custom in the islands wherever the English authority became strongly entrenched, the usages of the Scots and the Brehon laws of Ireland giving way to the practice of the English courts. Where that authority was doubtful there was a concordat,[1] giving the Welsh or Irish beyond the pale so much of English law as could be enforced, and so much of their old customs as could be retained. When the area of law is uncertain, its actual enforcement only goes as far as the physical force behind can carry it.

When in the next century Edward conquered Southern Scotland, the reaction which followed the defeat of Bannockburn tempted the Scots to adopt a legal system based on the continental Roman law. But, except for this, the legal system of Henry's day, in its essential features, remains at the present day the law and practice of the courts of the entire empire.

The financial side of the work, which gave to the legal system its chief strength under Henry and his successors, has entirely disappeared as the necessities of commerce demanded change.

The naval forces had not altered to any very great extent up to the time of Henry's accession since Ethelred II levied his militia navies to stave off Norse invasion. The ships had grown gradually bigger, and certain ports had become prominent in providing ships for national defence. Henry's control of an extensive seaboard to the south, combined with the decay of the maritime power of Scandinavia, fixed the point of defence on the south-east coast. The perpetual

[1] Such as the agreement between John and Llewelyn in 1201.

coming and going between England, Normandy, and Aquitaine, and Richard's expedition to Palestine, in which he fought a naval action with the Saracens, could not fail to stimulate both trade and naval power.

Richard's great fighting ships, like Cæsar's in the sea of Morbihan, were galleys propelled by oars, the rowers sitting in one, two, or three tiers. The Crusaders in this action attacked in the form of a half moon, putting their strongest ships on the wings, where they could use most pressure on the enemy. Like the Northmen, they came to close quarters, to ram or to sink or to board: once locked together, personal strength and courage settled the result of the contest.

Keeping control of the seas, especially on the Egyptian coast, might have enabled the Crusaders to destroy the Saracen power. Unfortunately they had no leader who sufficiently appreciated the conditions of naval supremacy.

Naval matters made great growth under John, who throughout his reign paid special attention to shipping and commerce. He appreciated the value of the Solent as a roadstead, and ordered the docks at Portsmouth to be enclosed with a wall, and pent-houses to be made to keep the ships' tackle.

When in 1205 he prepared to recover Normandy, he assembled a very large fleet at Portsmouth, and a great baronial land levy. But his prime minister, Hubert de Burgh, was too strong for him, and, for reasons which have never been explained, prohibited the expedition.

However, in 1213, John's fleet met the French at sea. With a notice of this engagement, the first of the great series of naval victories which adorn our history, this volume must conclude.

Philip Augustus, acting as the agent of the pope, had collected some seventeen hundred vessels in the harbours of Calais, Boulogne, and Gravelines, and was preparing to invade England.

When he heard that John had submitted to the pope, he very unwillingly gave up his expedition to England, and

in its stead attacked Flanders, whose earl, by refusing to follow, had compelled him to abandon the invasion.

He besieged Ghent, and sent his fleet to Damme, the port of Bruges, from which it was distant about a mile.

The Dutch had created a harbour here some two miles long, by reclamation from the sea, by a dam which gave the town its name. The harbour extended to Sluys.

John promptly sent five hundred ships to the attack of Philip's fleet. The French troops had plundered Damme, and were employed in ravaging the adjoining country when John's fleet arrived. Finding the ships left insufficiently manned, the English sailed in upon them, capturing those which were at anchor in the haven, and burning those which had been drawn up on the shore.

A sharp action followed both on land and sea, as the French troops returned from their raid inland to the defence of their ships. But in the end the English were successful, taking many prisoners and making considerable slaughter. They then laded three hundred of the French ships with stores of all kinds and sent them to England, burning besides a hundred which were ashore.

The English seamen then landed, were joined by the earl of Flanders, and attacked by land the town of Damme, where the remainder of the fleet was stationed in the higher part of the harbour, protected by Philip's army.

Here the French army was too much for them. They failed in the land attack on the town, and were driven by the French troops to their ships. But they retreated no farther, and Philip seeing that he could not save the rest of his ships, set fire to them and to the town of Damme together.

With this victory the naval career of the islands may be said to have begun.

APPENDIX A

The following extracts are from the treaties and laws of the Wessex kingdom (from Thorpe's *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*):—

878. Alfred's Treaty with Guthrum

"This is the peace that King Alfred and King Guthrum and the Witan of all the English nation, and all the people that are in East Anglia, have all ordained and with oaths confirmed."

1. "First concerning our land boundaries: up on the Thames, and then up on the Lea and along the Lea unto its source, thence right to Bedford, thence up on the Ouse unto Watling Street."

2. In case of killing, English and Danish were to be valued alike for "were" (the value of the dead man according to his degree, to be paid to his kin or to his gild).

3. Provision for compurgation of accused.

The weakness of authority and dread of re-opening of the war through chance quarrels between Danes and Saxons is shown by provision 4: "And we all ordained on that day that the oaths were sworn that neither bond nor free might go to the host without leave no more than any of them to us."

Provision is made that for traffic of necessity between the Wessex men and the "host," hostages should be given.

Dooms were drawn up between the Danes of East Anglia and the English of Wessex which were confirmed by Edward the Elder.

These provide that the parties should "zealously renounce every kind of heathendom," that the king's "frith" (freedom from molestation, a guarantee of peace) and the Church's frith "stand equally inviolate."

Money penalties were imposed on both Dane and Englishman if he "violate Christianity or reverence heathenism by

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word or work," for crimes of various kinds, for withholding tithe, for Sunday marketing, breaking fasts, and so forth. "If anyone wrong an ecclesiastic or a foreigner, through any means, as to money or life, then shall the king or the earl there in the land, and the bishop of the people, be unto him in the place of a kinsman and a protector."

This last provision is repeated in the laws of 1014. It is well to remember in studying the difficulties of these times that, land tenure being the sole basis of society, the foreigner had no place in society, but was dependent solely on the protection given by the king or by the Church.

SUPPLEMENT TO EDGAR'S LAWS (Thorpe, p. 116), showing that he did not give laws outside of Wessex, but that East Anglia made its own.

"I will that secular rights stand among the Danes with as good laws as they best may choose. But with the English let that stand which I and my Witan have added to the dooms of my forefathers."

933. ETHELRED'S TREATY WITH OLAF TRYGVASSON

"These are the articles of peace and the agreements which King Ethelred and all his Witan have made with the army that Anlaf and Justin and Guthmund, Stegita's son, were with."

1. "And first; that secular peace stand between King Ethelred and all his people, and all the army to which the king gave money, according to the treaty which Sigeric archbishop, and Ethelred eoldorman, and Elfric eoldorman made; when they obtained of the king that they might buy frith for those districts which they under the king's hand ruled over. And if any naval armament commit ravages in England, that we shall find meat for them while they shall be with us" (Ethelred being unable, like Alfred, to cede to them large tracts of land). "And that every one of those lands which keep the frith towards any one of those who ravage England be outlaw to us and to the whole army."

2. "And let every merchant ship have frith that comes within port, though it be a hostile ship, if it be not driven.

And though it be driven, and it flee to any frith burh" (fortress is territory included in this treaty), "and the men escape into the burh, then let the men and what they bring with them have frith."

3. (This provision appears to contemplate incursions by the army, party to this treaty, into lands in England outside the treaty, and finding there with their enemies some party to this treaty.) "If King Ethelred's frith man come into unfrith land, and the army come thereto, let his ship and all his property have frith. If he have drawn up his ship, or made a hut, or pitched a tent, let him and all his property have frith," &c.

4. "If any man be robbed of his property, and he knows by what ship, let the steersman give up the property; or let him" (the steersman) "go with four others and be the fifth himself, and make denial, and that he took it lawfully, as was before agreed."

5. Equal payments for homicide for English and Danes.

6. In case of a murder within a burh, the inhabitants of the burh are to go and get the murderers. "If they will not, let the eolderman go; if he will not, let the king go; if he will not, let the 'eoldordom' lie in unfrith."

A general amnesty for the past.

7, 8, and 9. Provisions as to evidence in case of theft.

1008 (Thorpe, p. 129. "This is the ordinance that the king of the English and both the ecclesiastical and lay Witan have chosen and advised."

2. "That Christian men and uncondemned be not sold out of the country, especially into a heathen nation."

3. "The armaments also be diligently attended to."

4. "With respect to naval armaments as may be most diligently; so that everyone be stationed immediately after Easter every year."

28. "And if anyone without leave return from the fyrd in which the king himself is, let it be at peril of himself and all his estate; and he who else returns from the fyrd let him be liable in one hundred and twenty shillings."

35. "And let us faithfully support one royal lord, and all defend life and land together as well as we best may; and to God Almighty pray for aid with inward heart."

COUNCIL OF ENHAM ((?) date between 1008–1014)

"These are the ordinances which the councillors of the English selected and decreed."

32. "Let burhbots and bricbots be commenced on every side" (burhbot was the liability to keep fortresses in repair; bricbot, the like liability for roads and bridges; these two forming with the liability to serve on the fyrd, the *trinoda necessitas*, to which every freeman was liable), "and the armaments also, and naval armaments in like manner, always when there may be necessity, so that the common need be provided for."

33. "And it will be prudent that every year immediately after Easter ships of war be made ready."

34. Provisions for payment in case of injury to a ship.

35. Provision against leaving the fyrd.

37. Provision against plotting against the king.

All these later laws of Ethelred's reign show signs of a great increase of Church influence, the lay provisions in the laws being but a small proportion. Canute's laws, which are in greater part re-enactment of Ethelred's, are even more ecclesiastical.

APPENDIX B

PRIME SIGNING

OLAF'S meeting with the hermit at the Scilly Islands had evidently only resulted in what was called "prime signing."

Whatever its meaning may have been in the day of Augustine or Aidan, this preliminary baptism of the Northmen in Britain in the tenth century does not appear to have been connected with any religious instruction or to have expressed any religious conviction, but to have been merely a promise on the part of the person signed to abstain from pagan rites such as the eating of horse flesh, and to behave as a Christian, while in the pay of a

Christian chief, avoiding the offences for which money penalties are imposed in Alfred's treaty with Guthrum, a position which made it difficult openly to join a pagan enemy after against his former chief. Thus in *Egil's Saga* when Egil, a man not burdened by scruples, joins Athelstan, the king asks him to consent to baptism, for, says the saga, "this was then a common custom both with merchants and those who took pay in Christian armies, since those who were 'prime signed' (as it was termed) could hold all intercourse with Christians and heathens alike, while retaining the faith which was most to their minds."

In the saga of Olaf the Saint, when Olaf refused to engage in his army before the battle of Stiklestad some vagabond robbers unless they would submit to baptism, the saga writer makes one of them say: "If I go into battle I will give my help to the king, for he has most need of help. And if I must believe in a God, why not in the White Christ as well as in any other? Now it is my advice therefore that we let ourselves be baptized, since the king insists so much upon it."

The pagan leaders made no objection to Christian followers. But the Christian chiefs, at least in later times, insisted on this outward and visible sign before they would admit a foreigner into the Christian army.

APPENDIX C

THE FALL OF LONDON BRIDGE

THERE would seem to be no reason to doubt this story of the pulling down of London Bridge by Olaf and his men. A story depending so much on local knowledge of London is not likely to have been invented by the saga writers of Iceland or of Norway, and it is a very probable happening, though the part taken by Olaf may have been exaggerated. May not St. Olave's Church, Tooley or Olave Street, and Battle Bridge Lane on the south-east side of the bridge be connected with this story? Yet as there is a habit of looking upon any natural story from the sagas as apocryphal, and as readers may not be acquainted with wooden bridges, an experience of the author may be of interest.

When in the United States I lived for some time on the French Broad River in North Carolina, a rapid river spanned by wooden bridges of the character of the London Bridge described in the sagas. The material for these bridges was cut and hewn in the mountain forests and "snaked" down to the river by teams of six to eight oxen. Each arch was made on the river bank of five round trees of acacia or locust wood, stripped of the bark and pointed like a pencil at each end, the lower ends being driven through a "mud sill" of soft poplar wood, to be sunk in the river bed, and the upper end through a cap of the same wood, the outer piles sloping down outwards. When put together the arch was slid into the river, and floated and pulled into place. The hewn sleepers for the floor, about a foot square, were then pushed over the arch from an abutment built on the bank, and held in place by a wooden pin. Such bridges last a long time so long as the only wear is the traffic from above. But the lumbermen in the mountains cut logs and brought them to the river bank. Then when the freshet came they pushed them into the river, and they came pounding down on the bridges. Sometimes the bridge would go; at others it was pushed over on a slant until the mule's instinct told him that it was unsafe to cross. Then we took canoes, and, tying ropes on the arch as high up as possible, we rowed and punted up the river against the stream, with the other end of the rope fastened to our boat, and by straining pulled the bridge back into an upright position, the mud sill gradually sinking again by its own weight into the silt of the river bed. Sometimes as a help, other ropes from the bridge were tied round trees on the river bank. We never had any great difficulty in pulling the bridges back.

The arches of London Bridge do not seem to have had any of the mud sills which made the strength of our arches, the piles, according to the saga, being driven into the bottom of the river. Besides this, the strength of the tide with which Olaf would pull, the height of the arches of the bridge which would give a greater leverage, the great length of the bridge which would weaken each individual arch, and especially the great weight on the top, the overhanging buttresses crowded with people and with their wagon loads of stones and missiles, all collected on the side of the bridge on which the Northmen were pulling, were

all in favour of Olaf's success. One or two of the piles once loosened, the bridge was gone. The difficulty would be to avoid the heavy stones when rowing out from under the bridge after they had fastened the rope or chain. But they either had very good luck or the Danes were bad shots.

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